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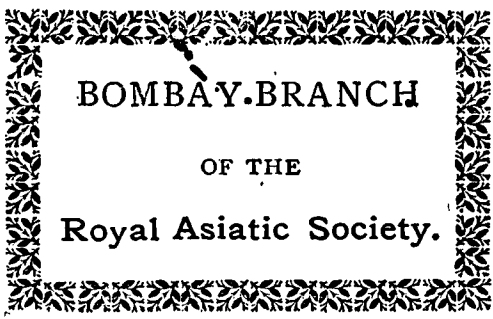

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TALES

OF

A GRANDFATHER;

BEING

STORIES

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SCOTTISH HISTORY.

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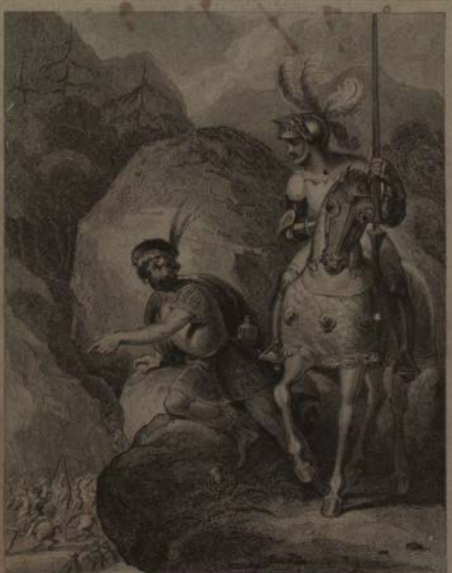

Drawn by H. Corbould

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A SCOTTISH CHIEF SHEWING JOHN DE VIENNE THE ENGLISH ARMY DEFILING THROUGH A NARROW PASS.

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TALES OF A GRANDFATHER.

TALES OF A GRANDFATHER.

CHAP. I.

Regency and Death of Randolph—Battle of Dupplin.—Accession of Edward Baliol to the Throne of Scotland, and his Flight to England—Battle of Halidon Hill, and Return of Baliol.

Robert Bruce, the greatest King who ever wore the Scottish crown, being dead, as you have been told, the kingdom descended to his son David, who was called David the Second, to distinguish him from the first King of that name, who reigned about a hundred years before. This David the Second was only four years old at his father's death; and although we have seen children who thought themselves very wise at that

age, yet it is not usual to give them the management of kingdoms. So Randolph, Earl of Moray, of whom you have heard so much, became what is called Regent of the kingdom of Scotland; that is, he exercised the royal authority until the King should be old enough to take the charge upon himself. This wise provision had been made by Bruce, with consent of the Parliament of Scotland, and was very acceptable to the kingdom.

The Regent was very strict in administering justice. If a husbandman had the plough-irons stolen from his plough when he left them in the field, Randolph caused the Sheriff of the county to pay the value; because it was the duty of that magistrate to protect property left in the open fields. A fellow tried to cheat under colour of this law: he hid his own plough-irons, and pretending they were stolen, claimed the price from the Sheriff, and was paid accordingly the estimated value, which was two shillings. But the fraud being discovered, the Regent caused the man to be hanged.

Upon one occasion, a criminal who had slain a priest, and afterwards fled to Rome and done penance there, was brought before the Regent. The culprit confessed the murder, but pleaded that he had obtained the Pope's pardon. "The Pope," said Randolph, "might pardon you for killing a priest, but his remission cannot avail you for murdering a subject of the King of Scotland." This was asserting a degree of independence of the Pope's authority, which was very unusual among the princes and governors of the time.

While the Regent was sitting in judgment at Wigton, in Galloway, a man stepped forward to complain, that at the very time he was speaking, a company of his enemies were lying in ambush in a neighbouring forest, to put him to death. Randolph sent a party of his attendants to seize the men, and bring them before him. "Is it you," said he, "who lie in wait to kill the King's liege subjects?—To the gallows with them instantly."

Randolph was to be praised for his justice, but not for his severity. He appears to have taken a positive pleasure in putting criminals to death, which marked the ferocity of the times and the turn of his own disposition. Having sent his Coroner before him to Ellandonan Castle in the Highlands, to execute certain thieves and robbers, that officer caused their heads to be hung round the walls of the castle to the number of fifty. When Randolph came down the lake in a barge, and saw the castle adorned with these grim and bloody heads, he said, "He loved better to look upon them than on any garland of roses he had ever seen."

The efforts of the Regent to preserve the establishment of justice and order, were soon interrupted, and he was called upon to take measures for the defence of the country; for Robert Bruce was no sooner in his grave than the enemies of his family began to plot the means of destroying the government which he had established. The principal person concerned in these machi-

nations was Edward Baliol, the son of that John Baliol who was formerly created King of Scotland by Edward I., and afterwards dethroned by him, and committed to prison, when Edward desired to seize upon the country for himself. After being long detained in prison, John Baliol was at length suffered to go to France, where he died in obscurity. But his son Edward Baliol, seeing, as he thought, a favourable opportunity, resolved to renew the claim of his father to the Scottish throne. He came over to England with this purpose, and although Edward III., then King of England, remembering the late successes of the Scots, did not think it prudent to enter into a war with them, yet Baliol found a large party of powerful English Barons, well disposed to aid his enterprise. Their cause of resentment was as follows:—

When Scotland was freed from the dominion of England, all the Englishmen to whom Edward the First, or his successors, had given lands within that kingdom, were of course deprived of them. But there was

another class of English proprietors in Scotland, who claimed estates to which they succeeded, not by the grant of the English prince, but by inheritance from Scottish families, to whom they were related, and their pretensions were admitted by Robert Bruce himself, at the treaty of peace made at Northampton, in 1328, in which it was agreed that these English Lords should receive back their Scottish inheritances. Notwithstanding this agreement, Bruce, who did not desire to see Englishmen enjoy land in Scotland, under what pretext soever, refused, or delayed at least, to fulfil this part of the treaty. Hence, upon the death of that monarch, the disinherited Lords resolved to levy forces, and unite themselves with Edward Baliol, to recover their estates, and determined to invade Scotland for that purpose. But their united forces did not amount to more than four hundred men-at-arms, and about four thousand archers and soldiers of every description. This was a small army with which to

invade a nation which had defended itself so well against the whole English forces; but Scotland was justly supposed to be much weakened by the death of her valiant King.

A great misfortune befell the country, in the unexpected death of the Regent Randolph, whose experience and valour might have done so much for the protection of Scotland. He had assembled an army, and was busied with preparations for defence against the enterprise of Baliol and the disinherited Lords, when, wasted by a painful and consuming disorder, he died at Musselburgh, July 1332. The regret of the Scottish nation for the Regent's death was so great, that it has occasioned their historians to allege that he was poisoned by the English; but for this there seems no foundation.

Donald, Earl of Mar, nephew to Robert Bruce, was appointed by the Scottish Parliament to be Regent in the room of the Earl of Moray; but he was without experience

as a soldier, and of far inferior talents as a man.

Meantime, the King of England, still affecting to maintain peace with Scotland, prohibited the disinherited Lords from invading Scotland from the English frontier. But he did not object to their equipping a small fleet in an obscure English sea-port, for the purpose of accomplishing the same object by sea. They landed in Fife, with Baliol at their head, and defeated the Earl of Fife, who marched hastily to oppose them. They then advanced northward towards Dupplin, near which the Earl of Mar lay encamped with a large army, whilst another, under the Earl of March, was advancing from the southern counties of Scotland to attack the disinherited Lords on the flank and in the rear.

It seemed as if that small handful of men must have been destroyed by the numbers collected to oppose them. But Edward Baliol took the bold resolution of attacking the Regent's army by night, and in their

camp. With this purpose he crossed the Earn, which river divided the two hostile armies. The Earl of Mar had placed no sentries, nor observed any other of the usual precautions against surprise, and the English came upon his army while the men were asleep and totally unprepared. They made a great slaughter amongst the Scots, whose numbers only served to increase the confusion. The Regent was himself slain, with the Earls of Carrick, of Moray, of Menteith, and many other men of eminence. Many thousands of the Scots were slain with the sword, smothered in the flight, or drowned in the river. The English were themselves surprised at gaining, with such inferior numbers, so great and decided a victory.

I said that the Earl of March was advancing with the southland forces to assist the Regent. But upon learning Mar's defeat and death, March acted with so little activity or spirit, that he was not unjustly suspected of being favourably inclined to Ba-

liol's cause. That victorious general now assumed the crown of Scotland, which was placed upon his head at Scoon; a great part of Scotland surrendered to his authority, and it seemed as if the fatal battle of Dupplin, fought 12th August, 1332, had destroyed all the advantages which had been gained in that of Bannockburn.

Edward Baliol made an unworthy use of his success. He hastened again to acknowledge the King of England as his liege lord and superior, although every claim to such supremacy had been renounced, and the independence of Scotland explicitly acknowledged by the treaty of Northampton. He also surrendered to England the strong town and castle of Berwick, and engaged to become his follower in all his wars at his own charges. Edward III. engaged on his part to maintain Baliol in possession of the crown of Scotland. Thus was the kingdom reduced pretty much to the same state of dependence and subjection to England as when the grandfather of Edward

placed the father of Baliol on the throne, in the year 1292, about forty years before.

But the success of Baliol was rather apparent than real. The Scottish patriots were in possession of many of the strengths of the country, and the person of the young King David was secured in Dumbarton castle, one of the strongest fortresses in Scotland, or perhaps in the world.

At no period of her history was Scotland devoid of brave men, able and willing to defend her rights. When the scandalous treaty, by which Baliol had surrendered the independence of his country to Edward, came to be known in Scotland, the successors of Bruce's companions were naturally among the first to assert the cause of freedom. John Randolph, second son of the Regent, had formed a secret union with Archibald Douglas, a younger brother of the Good Lord James, and they proceeded to imitate the actions of their relatives. They suddenly assembled a considerable force, and attacking Baliol, who was feasting near Annan,

they cut his guards in pieces, killed his brother, and chased him out of Scotland, in such haste that he escaped on horseback, without time to clothe himself, or even to saddle his horse.

Archibald Douglas, who afterwards became Earl of Douglas, was a brave man, like his father, but not so good a general, nor so fortunate in his undertakings.

There was another Douglas, called Sir William, a natural son of the Good Lord James, who made a great figure at this period. Although a bastard by birth, he had acquired a large fortune by marrying with the heiress of the Grahames of Dalkeith, and possessed the strong castle of the same name, with the still more important one called the Hermitage, a large and massive fortress situated in the wild country of Liddesdale, within three or four miles of the English Border. This Sir William Douglas, called usually the Knight of Liddesdale, was a very brave man and a valiant soldier, but he was fierce, cruel, and treacherous, so that he did not keep up

their imprisonment, by paying a large ransom; the Earl of March also embraced the party of David Bruce. An equally brave champion was Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalwolsy, who, placing himself at the head of a brave troop of young Scotsmen, chose for his residence the large caves which are still to be seen in the glen of Roslin, from which he used to sally forth and fight with the Englishmen and their adherents. From this place of refuge he sometimes made excursions as far as Northumberland, and drove spoil from that country. No young Scottish soldier was thought fit to pretend to any renown in arms unless he had served in Ramsay's band.

A considerable battle was fought in the North of Scotland, which turned to the advantage of the young King. Kildrummie Castle was one of the four which held out for David Bruce. It was defended by King David's aunt, a venerable matron, Christian Bruce, the wife of Sir Andrew Murray, and the sister of the brave King Robert; for in those warlike days women com-

manded castles, and sometimes fought in battle. This castle, which was one of the last places of refuge for the patriots, was besieged by David Hastings, the Earl of Athole, one of the disinherited Lords, who, having changed sides more than once during the war, had at length turned entirely to the English party. Sir Andrew Murray of Bothwell, who had resumed his office of Regent, resolved to assemble the strongest force which the patriots could muster, and calling together the Knight of Liddesdale, Ramsay, and the Earl of March, he moved against the Earl of Athole, to compel him to raise the siege of Kildrummie, and relieve its heroic defender. All these great nobles were unable to raise above one thousand men, while Athole had three times that number under his command.

But as the Scots approached the territory of Kildrummie, they were joined by one John Craig. This gentleman belonged to the royalists of Scotland, but having been made prisoner by the Earl of Athole, he had agreed to pay a large ransom, and the morrow was

the time appointed for payment. He was therefore anxious to bring about the defeat or death of Athole before the money was paid to him, and thus to save his ransom. With this purpose, he conducted the Scotsmen through the forest of Braemar, where they were joined by the natives of that territory, and thus came suddenly on the Earl of Athole, who lay encamped in the forest. Athole started up in surprise when he saw the enemies appear so unexpectedly; but he was a stout-hearted man, though fickle in his political attachments. He looked at a great rock which lay beside him, and swore an oath that he would not fly that day until that rock should show him the example. A small brook divided the two parties. The Knight of Liddesdale, who led the van of the Scots, advanced a little way down the bank on his side, then taking his spear by the middle, and keeping his own men back with it, he bade them *halt*, which occasioned some murmurs. The Earl of Athole, seeing this pause, exclaimed, "These men

are half discomfited;" and rushed to charge them, followed by his men in some disorder. When they had passed the brook, and were ascending the bank on the other side,— "Now is our time," said the Knight of Liddesdale, and charged down hill with levelled lances, bearing Athole's followers backwards into the ford. He himself, disdaining quarter, was slain under a great oak-tree. This was the battle of Kilblene, fought on Saint Andrew's day, 1335.

Among the warlike exploits of this period, we must not forget the defence of the Castle of Dunbar by the celebrated Countess of March. Her lord, as we have seen, had embraced the side of David Bruce, and had taken the field with the Regent. The Countess, who from her complexion was termed Black Agnes, by which name she is still familiarly remembered, was a high-spirited and courageous woman, the daughter of that Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, whom I have so often mentioned, and the heiress of his valour and patriotism. The Castle of Dunbar itself was very strong,

being built upon a chain of rocks stretching into the sea, having only one passage to the mainland, which was well fortified. It was besieged by Montague, Earl of Salisbury, who employed to destroy its walls great military engines, constructed to throw huge stones, with which machines fortifications were attacked before the use of cannon.

Black Agnes set all his attempts at defiance, and showed herself with her maids on the walls of the castle, wiping the places where the huge stones fell with a clean towel, as if they could do no ill to her castle, save raising a little dust, which a napkin could wipe away.

The Earl of Salisbury then commanded them to bring forward to the assault an engine of another kind, being a species of wooden shed, or house, rolled forward on wheels, with a roof of peculiar strength, which, from resembling the ridge of a hog's back, occasioned the machine to be called a Sow. This, according to the old mode of warfare, was thrust up to the walls of a besieged castle or city, and served to protect

from the arrows and stones of the besieged a party of soldiers placed within the sow, who were in the meanwhile to undermine the wall, or break an entrance through it with pickaxes and mining tools. When the Countess of March saw this engine advanced to the walls of the castle, she called out to the Earl of Salisbury in derision, and making a kind of rhyme,—

> "Beware, Montagow,
> For farrow shall thy sow."

At the same time she made a signal, and a huge fragment of rock, which hung prepared for the purpose, was dropped down from the wall upon the sow, whose roof was thus dashed to pieces. As the English soldiers, who had been within it, were running as fast as they could to get out of the way of the arrows and stones from the wall, Black Agnes called out, "Behold the litter of English pigs!"

The Earl of Salisbury could jest also on such serious occasions. One day he rode near the walls with a knight dressed in ar-

mour of proof, having three folds of mail over an acton, or leathern jacket; notwithstanding which, one William Spens shot an arrow with such force that it penetrated all these defences, and reached the heart of the wearer. "That is one of my lady's love-tokens," said the Earl, as he saw the knight fall dead from his horse. "Black Agnes's love-shafts pierce to the heart."

Upon another occasion, the Countess of March had wellnigh made the Earl of Salisbury her prisoner. She made one of her people enter into treaty with the besiegers, pretending to betray the castle. Trusting to this agreement, the Earl came at midnight before the gate, which he found open, and the portcullis drawn up. As Salisbury was about to enter, one John Copland, a squire of Northumberland, pressed on before him, and as soon as he passed the threshold, the portcullis was dropped, and thus the Scots missed their principal prey, and made prisoner only a person of inferior condition.

At length, the Castle of Dunbar was re-

lieved by Alexander Ramsay of Dalwolsy, who brought the Countess supplies by sea both of men and provisions. The Earl of Salisbury, learning this, despaired of success, and raised the siege, which had lasted nineteen weeks. The minstrels made songs in praise of the perseverance and courage of Black Agnes. The following lines are nearly the sense of what is preserved:

> She kept a stir in tower and trench,
> That brawling boisterous Scottish wench;
> Came I early, came I late,
> I found Agnes at the gate.

The brave Sir Andrew Murray of Bothwell, the Regent of Scotland, died in 1338, while the war was raging on all sides. He was a good patriot, and a great loss to his country, to which he had rendered the highest services. There is a story told of him, which shows how composed he could be in circumstances of great danger. He was in the Highlands with a small body of followers, when the King of England came upon him with an army of twenty thousand. The Regent heard the news, but, being then about

to hear mass, did not permit his devotions to be interrupted. When mass was ended, the people around him pressed him to order a retreat; "There is no haste," said Murray, composedly. At length his horse was brought out, he was about to mount, and all expected that the retreat was to commence. But the Regent observed that a strap of his armour had given way, and this interposed new delays. He sent for a particular coffer, out of which he took a piece of skin, and cut and formed with his own hand, and with much deliberation, the strap which he wanted. By this time, the English were drawing very near, and as they were so many in number, some of the Scottish knights afterwards told the historian who narrates the incident, that no space of time ever seemed so long to them as that which Sir Andrew employed in cutting that thong of leather. Now, if this had been done in a mere vaunting or bragging manner, it would have been the behaviour of a vain-glorious fool. But Sir Andrew Murray had already fixed upon the mode of his retreat, and he knew

that every symptom of coolness and deliberation which he might show would render his men steady and composed in their turn, from beholding the confidence of their leader. He at length gave the word, and, putting himself at the head of his followers, made a most masterly retreat, during which the English, notwithstanding their numbers, were unable to obtain any advantage over him, so well did the Regent avail himself of the nature of the ground.

You may well imagine, my dear child, that during these long and terrible wars which were waged, when castles were defended and taken, prisoners made, many battles fought, and numbers of men wounded and slain, the state of the country of Scotland was most miserable. There was no finding refuge or protection in the law, at a time when everything was decided by the strongest arm and the longest sword. There was no use in raising crops, when the man who sowed them was not, in all probability, permitted to reap the grain. There was little religious devotion where so much

violence prevailed; and the hearts of the people became so much inclined to acts of blood and fury, that all laws of humanity and charity were transgressed without scruple. People were found starved to death in the woods with their families, while the country was so depopulated and void of cultivation, that the wild deer came out of the remote woods, and approached near to cities and the dwellings of men. Whole families were reduced to eat grass, and others, it is said, found a more horrible aliment in the flesh of their fellow creatures. One wretch used to set traps for human beings as if for wild beasts, and subsisted on their flesh. This cannibal was called Christian of the Cleek, from the cleek or hook which he used in his horrid traps.

In the middle of all these horrors, the English and Scottish knights and nobles, when there was any truce between the countries, supplied the place of the wars in which they were commonly engaged, with tournaments and games of chivalry. These were

meetings not for the express purpose of fighting, but for that of trying which was the best man-at-arms. But instead of wrestling, leaping, or running races on foot or horse, the fashion then was that the gentlemen tilted together, that is, rode against each other in armour with their long lances, and tried which could bear the other out of the saddle, and throw him to the ground. Sometimes they fought on foot with swords and axes, and although all was meant in courtesy and fair play, yet lives were often lost in this idle manner, as much as if the contest had been carried on with the purpose of armed battle. In later times they fought with swords purposely blunted on the edge, and with lances which had no steel point; but in the times we speak of at present, they used in tilts and tournaments the same weapons which they employed in wars.

A very noted entertainment of this kind was given both to Scottish and English champions by Henry of Lancaster, then called Earl of Derby, and afterwards King

Henry IV. of England. He invited the Knight of Liddesdale, the Good Sir Alexander Ramsay, and about twenty other distinguished Scottish men, to a tilting match, which took place near Berwick. After receiving and entertaining his Scottish guests nobly, the Earl of Derby began to inquire at Ramsay in what manner of armour the knights should tilt together.

"With shields of plate," said Ramsay, "such as men use in tournaments."

This may be supposed a peculiarly weighty and strong kind of armour, intended merely for this species of encounter.

"Nay," said the Earl of Derby, "we shall gain little if we tilt in such safety; let us rather wear the lighter armour which we wear in battle."

"Content are we," answered Sir Alexander Ramsay, "to fight in our silk doublets, if such be your lordship's pleasure."

The Knight of Liddesdale was wounded on the wrist by the splinter of a spear, and was obliged to desist from the exercise. A

Scottish knight, called Sir Patrick Grahame, tilted with a warlike English Baron named Talbot, whose life was saved by his wearing two breastplates. The Scottish lance pierced through both, and sunk an inch into the breast. Had he been only armed as according to agreement, Talbot had been a dead man. Another English knight challenged the Grahame at supper time, to run three courses with him the next day.

"Dost thou ask to tilt with me?" said the Grahame; "rise early in the morning, confess your sins, and make your peace with God, for you shall sup in Paradise." Accordingly, on the ensuing morning, Grahame run him through the body with his lance, and he died on the spot. Another English knight was also slain, and one of the Scots mortally wounded. William Ramsay was borne through the helmet with a lance, the splinter of the broken spear remaining in his skull, and nailing his helmet to his head. As he was expected to die on the spot, a priest was sent for, who heard

him confess his sins, without the helmet being removed.

"Ah, it is a goodly sight," quoth the good Earl of Derby, much edified by this spectacle, "to see a knight make his shrift (that is, confession of his sins) in his helmet. God send me such an ending!"

But when the shrift was over, Alexander Ramsay, to whom the wounded knight was brother, or kinsman, made him lie down at full length, and with surgery as rough as their pastime, held his friend's head down with his foot, while, by main strength, he pulled the fragment of the spear out of the helmet, and out of the wound. Then William Ramsay started up, and said, "that he should do well enough."

"Lo! what stout hearts men may bear," said the Earl of Derby, as much admiring the surgical treatment as he had done the religious. Whether the patient lived or died, does not appear.

In fixing the prizes, it was settled that the English knights should decide which

of the Scottish had done best, and the Scottish should, in like manner, judge the valour of the English. Much equity was shown in the decision on both sides, and the Earl of Derby was munificent in distribution of gifts and prizes. This may serve to show you the amusements of this stirring period, of which war and danger were the sport as well as the serious occupation.

CHAP. III.

Departure of Edward Baliol from Scotland—Return of David II.—Death of Sir Alexander Ramsay—Death of the Knight of Liddesdale—Battle of Neville's Cross—Captivity, Liberation, and Death of King David.

NOTWITHSTANDING the valiant defence maintained by the Scots, their country was reduced to a most disastrous state, by the continued wars of Edward III., who was a wise and warlike King as ever lived. Could he have turned against Scotland the whole power of his kingdom, he might probably have effected the complete conquest, which had been so long attempted in vain. But while the wars in Scotland were at the hottest, Edward became also engaged in hostilities with France, having laid claim to the crown of that kingdom. Thus he was obliged to slacken his efforts in Scotland, and the patriots began to gain ground de-

cisively in the dreadful contest which was so obstinately maintained on both sides.

The Scots sent an embassy to obtain money and assistance from the French, and they received supplies of both, which enabled them to recover their castles and towns from the English.

Edinburgh Castle was taken from the invaders by a stratagem. The Knight of Liddesdale, with two hundred chosen men, embarked at Dundee, in a merchant vessel commanded by one William Curry. The shipmaster, on their arrival at Leith, went with a party of his sailors to the Castle, carrying barrels of wine and hampers of provisions, which he pretended it was his desire to sell to the English governor and his garrison. But getting entrance at the gate, under this pretext, they raised the war shout of Douglas, and the Knight of Liddesdale rushed in with his soldiers and secured the Castle. Perth, and other important places, were also retaken by the Scots, and Edward Baliol retired out of the coun-

try, in despair of making good his pretensions to the crown.

The nobles of Scotland, finding the affairs of the kingdom more prosperous, now came to the resolution of bringing back from France, where he had resided for safety, their young King, David II., and his consort, Queen Joanna. They arrived in 1341.

David II. was still a youth, neither did he possess at any period of life the wisdom and talents of his father, the great King Robert. The nobles of Scotland had become each a petty prince on his own estates; they made war on each other as they had done upon the English, and the poor King possessed no power of restraining them. A most melancholy instance of this discord took place, shortly after the young King's return from France.

I have told you how Sir Alexander Ramsay and the Knight of Liddesdale assisted each other in fighting against the English. They were great friends and companions in arms. But Ramsay, having taken by storm

the strong Castle of Roxburgh, the King bestowed on him the office of Sheriff of that county, which was before enjoyed by the Knight of Liddesdale. As this was placing another person in his room, the Knight of Liddesdale altogether forgot his old friendship for Ramsay, and resolved to put him to death. He came suddenly upon him with a strong party of men, while he was administering justice at Hawick. Ramsay, having no suspicion of injury from the hand of his old comrade, and having few men with him, was easily overpowered, and being wounded, was hurried away to the lonely Castle of the Hermitage, which stands in the middle of the morasses of Liddesdale. Here he was thrown into a dungeon, where he had no other sustenance except some grain which fell down from a granary above; and after lingering a little while in that dreadful condition, the brave Sir Alexander Ramsay died. This was in 1341. More than five hundred years afterwards, that is, about forty years ago, a mason, digging amongst the ruins of Hermit-

age Castle, broke into a dungeon, where lay a quantity of chaff, some human bones, and a bridle bit, which were supposed to mark the vault as the place of Ramsay's death. The bridle bit was given to grandpapa, who presented it to the present gallant Earl of Dalhousie, a brave soldier, like his ancestor Sir Alexander Ramsay, from whom he is lineally descended.

The King was much displeased at the commission of so great a crime on the person of so faithful a subject. He made some attempts to avenge the murder, but the Knight of Liddesdale was too powerful to be punished, and the King was obliged to receive him again into friendship and confidence. But God in his own good time revenged this cruel murder. About five years after the crime was committed, the Knight of Liddesdale was taken prisoner by the English at the battle of Neville's Cross, near Durham, and is suspected of having obtained his liberty by entering into a treacherous league with the English monarch. He had no time to carry his trea-

son, however, into effect; for, shortly after his liberation, he was slain whilst hunting in Ettrick Forest, by his near relation and godson, William Lord Douglas. The place where he fell was called from his name, William-hope. It is a pity that the Knight of Liddesdale committed that great crime of murdering Ramsay, and entered into the treasonable treaty with the King of England. In other respects, he was ranked so high in public esteem, that he was called the Flower of Chivalry; and an old writer has said of him, "He was terrible in arms, modest and gentle in peace, the scourge of England, and the buckler and wall of Scotland; one whom good success never made presumptuous, and whom evil fortune never discouraged."

We return to the state of Scotland at the time when the young King has restored. Battles and skirmishes were fought on all sides; but the Scots having gained back the whole of their own country, the war became less inveterate; and although no settled peace took place, yet truces, to endure for a cer-

tain number of months and years, were agreed upon from time to time; and the English historians allege that the Scottish nation were always ready to break them when a tempting opportunity occurred.

Such a truce was in existence about 1346, when Edward the Third being absent in France, and in the act of besieging Calais, David was induced, by the pressing and urgent counsels of the French King, to renew the war, and profit by occasion of the King's absence from England. The young King of Scotland raised accordingly a large army, and entering England on the west frontier, he marched eastward towards Durham, harassing and wasting the country with great severity; the Scots boasting, that, now the King and his nobles were absent, there were none in England to oppose them, save priests and base mechanics.

But they were greatly deceived. The lords of the northern counties of England, together with the Archbishop of York, assembled a gallant army. They defeated the vanguard of the Scots, and came upon

the main body by surprise. The English army, in which there were many ecclesiastics, bore, as their standard, a crucifix, displayed amid the banners of the nobility. The Scots had taken post among some inclosures, which greatly embarrassed their movements, and their ranks remaining stationary, were, as on former occasions, destroyed by the English arrows. Here Sir John Grahame offered his services to disperse the bowmen, if he were intrusted with a body of cavalry. But although this was the movement which decided the battle of Bannockburn, he could not obtain the means of attempting it. In the meantime the Scottish army fell fast into disorder. The King himself fought bravely in the midst of his nobles, and was wounded twice with arrows. At length he was captured by John Copland, a Northumberland gentleman; the same who was made prisoner at Dunbar. He did not secure his royal captive without resistance; for in the struggle, the King dashed out two of Copland's teeth with his dagger. The left wing

of the Scottish army continued fighting long after the rest were routed, and at length made a safe retreat. It was commanded by the Steward of Scotland and the Earl of March. Very many of the Scottish nobility were slain; very many made prisoners. The King himself was led in triumph through the streets of London, and committed to the Tower a close prisoner. This battle was fought at Neville's Cross, near Durham, on 17th October, 1346.

Thus was another great victory gained by the English over the Scots. It was followed by farther advantages, which gave the victors for a time possession of the country from the Scottish Border, as far as the verge of Lothian. But the Scots, as usual, were no sooner compelled to momentary submission, than they began to consider the means of shaking off the yoke.

William Douglas, son to that Douglas who was killed at Halidon Hill, near Berwick, now displayed his share of that courage and conduct which seemed the birthright of that extraordinary family. He re-

covered his own territories of Douglasdale, drove the English out of Ettrick Forest, and assisted the inhabitants of Teviotdale in regaining their independence.

On this occasion, indeed, the invasion of the English was not attended with the same extensively bad effects as on former victories obtained by them. The title of Baliol was not again set up, and that nominal sovereign surrendered to the English monarch all his right and interest in the kingdom of Scotland, in testimony of which he presented him a handful of earth belonging to the country, and a crown of gold. Edward, in reward of this surrender of the Scottish crown, fixed a large annual income upon Baliol, who retired from public affairs, and lived ever afterwards in such obscurity, that historians do not even record the period of his death. Nothing which he afterwards did bore the same marks of courage and talent, as the enterprise in which he commanded the Disinherited Barons, and obtained the great victory at the battle of Dupplin. It seems therefore likely, that

he had upon that occasion some assistance which he did not afterwards enjoy.

Edward III. was not more fortunate in making war on Scotland in his own name, than when he used the pretext of supporting Baliol. He marched into East-Lothian in spring 1355, and committed such ravages that the period was long marked by the name of the *Burned Candlemass*, because so many towns and villages were burned. But the Scots had removed every species of provisions which could be of use to the invaders, and avoided a general battle, while they engaged in a number of skirmishes. In this manner Edward was compelled to retreat out of Scotland, after sustaining much loss.

After the failure of this effort, Edward seems to have despaired of the conquest of Scotland, and entered into terms for a truce, and for setting the King at liberty.

Thus David II. at length obtained his freedom from the English, after he had been detained in prison eleven years. The Scots agreed to pay a ransom of one hundred thousand marks, a heavy charge on a country al-

ways poor, and exhausted by the late wars. The people were so delighted to see the King once more, that they followed him everywhere; and, which shows the rudeness of the times, broke even into his private chamber, till, incensed at their troublesome and intrusive loyalty, the King snatched a mace from an officer, and broke with his own royal hand the head of the liegeman who was nearest to him. After this rebuke, saith the historian, he was permitted to be private in his apartment.

The latter years of this King's life have nothing very remarkable, excepting, that after the death of Joanna of England, his first wife, he made an imprudent marriage with one Margaret Logie, a woman of great beauty, but of obscure family; he was afterwards divorced or separated from her. He had no children by either of his wives. David the Second died at the age of forty-seven years, in the Castle of Edinburgh, 22d February, 1370-1. He had reigned forty-two years, of which eleven were spent in captivity.

met with. They complained that the nation which they came to assist treated them with no kindness or good-will, and that they withheld from them forage, provisions, and other supplies. The Scots replied, on the other hand, that their allies were an expense to them, without being of any use; that their wants were many, and could not be supplied in so poor a country as Scotland; and, finally, that they insulted the inhabitants, and pillaged the country wherever they durst. Nor would the Scots permit the French to leave Scotland till they gave security that they would pay the expenses of their own maintenance. The French knights, who had hoped to acquire both wealth and fame, returned in very bad humour from a kingdom where the people were so wild and uncivilized, and the country so mountainous and poor; where the patches of cultivated land bore no proportion to the extended wastes, and the wild animals were much more numerous than those which were trained to the use of man.

It was from prudence, not from want of courage, that the Scottish avoided great battles with the English. They readily engaged in smaller actions, when they fought with the utmost valour on both sides, till, as an old historian expresses it, sword and lance would endure no longer, and then they would part from each other, saying, "Good day; and thanks for the sport you have shown." A very remarkable instance of such a desperate battle occurred in the year 1388.

The Scottish nobles had determined upon an invasion of England on a large scale, and had assembled a great army for that purpose; but learning that the people of Northumberland were assembling an army on the eastern frontier, they resolved to limit their incursion to that which might be achieved by the Earl of Douglas, with a chosen band of four or five thousand men. With this force he penetrated into the mountainous frontier of England, where an assault was least expected, and issuing forth

near Newcastle, fell upon the flat and rich country around, slaying, plundering, burning, and loading his army with spoil.

Percy, Earl of Northumberland, an English noble of great power, and with whom the Douglas had frequently had encounters, sent his two sons, Sir Henry and Sir Ralph Percy, to stop the progress of this invasion. Both were gallant knights, but the first, who, from his impetuosity, was called Hotspur, was one of the most distinguished warriors in England, as Douglas was in Scotland. The brothers threw themselves hastily into Newcastle, to defend that important town; and as Douglas, in an insulting manner, drew out his followers before the walls, they came out to skirmish with the Scots. Douglas and Henry Percy encountered personally; and it so chanced that Douglas got possession in the struggle of Hotspur's spear, to the end of which was attached a small ornament of silk, embroidered with pearls, on which was represented a lion, the

cognizance, as it is called, of the Percies. Douglas shook this trophy aloft, and declared that he would carry it into Scotland, and plant it on his castle of Dalkeith.

"That," said Percy, "shalt thou never do. I will regain my lance ere thou canst get back into Scotland."

"Then," said Douglas, "come to seek it, and thou shalt find it before my tent."

The Scots army, having completed the purpose of their expedition, began their retreat up the vale of the little river Reed, which afforded a tolerable road running towards the Scottish frontier. They encamped at Otterburn, about twenty miles from the frontier, on the 19th August, 1388.

In the middle of the night, the alarm arose in the Scottish camp that the English host were coming upon them, and the moonlight showed the advance of Sir Henry Percy, with a body of men equal or superior in number to that of Douglas. He had already crossed the Reed water, and was advancing towards the left flank of the Scottish army. Douglas,

not choosing to receive the assault in that position, drew his men out of the camp, and with a degree of military skill which could scarce have been expected when his forces were of such an undisciplined character, he altogether changed the position of the army, and presented his troops with their front to the advancing English.

Hotspur, in the meantime, marched his squadrons through the deserted camp, where there were none left but a few servants and stragglers of the army. The interruptions which the English troops met with, threw them a little into disorder, when the moon arising, showed them the Scottish army, who they fancied were retreating, drawn up in complete order, and prepared to fight. The battle commenced with the greatest fury; for Percy and Douglas were the two most distinguished soldiers of their time, and each army trusted in the courage and talents of their commanders, whose names were shouted on either side. The Scots, who were outnumbered, were at length about

to give way, when Douglas, their leader, caused his banner to advance, attended by his best men. He himself, shouting his war-cry of "Douglas!" rushed forward, clearing his way with the blows of his battle-axe, and breaking into the very thickest of the enemy. He fell, at length, under three mortal wounds. Had his death been known, it would probably have decided the battle against the Scots; but the English only knew that some brave man-at-arms had fallen. Meantime the other Scottish nobles pressed forward, and found their General dying among several of his faithful esquires and pages, who lay slain around. A stout priest, called William of North-Berwick, the chaplain of Douglas, was protecting the body of his patron with a long lance.

"How fares it, cousin?" said Sinclair, the first Scottish knight who came up to the wounded leader.

"Indifferently," answered Douglas; "but blessed be God, my ancestors have died in fields of battle, not on down-beds. I sink

fast; but let them still cry my war-cry, and conceal my death from my followers. There was a tradition in our family that a dead Douglas should win a field, and I trust it will be this day accomplished."

The nobles did as he had enjoined; they concealed the Earl's body, and again rushed on to the battle, shouting "Douglas! Douglas!" louder than before. The English were weakened by the loss of the brave brothers Henry and Ralph Percy, both of whom were made prisoners, fighting most gallantly, and almost no man of note amongst the English escaped death or captivity. Hence a Scottish poet has said of the name of Douglas,—

"Hosts have been known at that dread sound to yield,
And Douglas dead, his name has won the field."

Sir Henry Percy became the prisoner of Sir Hugh Montgomery, who obliged him for ransom to build a castle for him at Penorn in Ayrshire. The battle of Otterburn was disastrous to the leaders on both sides—Percy being made captive, and Douglas

slain on the field. It has been the subject of many songs and poems, and the great historian Froissart says, that, one other action only excepted, it was the best fought battle of that warlike time.

Robert II. died 19th April, 1390. His reign did not approach in glory to that of his maternal grandfather Robert Bruce; but it was far more fortunate than that of David II. The claims of Baliol to the crown were not revived; and though the English made more than one incursion into Scotland, they never were able to retain long possession of the country.

CHAP. V

Accession of Robert III.—Disorderly State of the Highlands—Conflict between the Clan Chattan and the Clan Kay, on the North Inch of Perth—Character and Death of the Duke of Rothsay, the Heir Apparent —Capture of Prince James by the English, and Death of Robert III.

THE eldest son of Robert II. was originally called John. But it was a popular remark, that the Kings named John, both of France and England, had been unfortunate, and the Scottish people were very partial to the name of Robert, from its having been borne by the Great Bruce. John Stewart, therefore, on ascending the Scottish throne, changed his name to that of Robert III. We shall see, however, that this poor King remained as unfortunate as if his name had been still John.

The disturbances of the Highlands were one of the plagues of his reign. You must recollect that that extensive range of mountains was inhabited by a race of men different in language and manners from the Lowlanders, and divided into families called Clans. The English termed them the Wild Scots, and the French the Scottish Savages; and, in good truth, very wild and savage they seem to have been. The losses which the Low Country had sustained by the English wars had weakened the counties next to the Highlands so much, that they became unable to repress the incursions of the mountaineers, who descended from their hills, took spoil, burned and destroyed, as if in the country of an enemy.

In 1392, a large body of these Highlanders broke down from the Grampian Mountains. The chiefs were called Clan-Donnochy, or sons of Duncan, answering to the clan now called Robertson. A party of the Ogilvies and Lindsays, under Sir Walter Ogilvy, Sheriff of Angus, marched hastily against them, and charged them with

their lances. But notwithstanding the advantage of their being mounted and completely sheathed in armour, the Highlanders defended themselves with such ferocity, as to slay the Sheriff and sixty of his followers, and repulse the Lowland gentlemen. To give some idea of their ferocity, it is told that Sir David Lindsay, having in the first encounter run his lance through the body of one of the Highlanders, bore him down and pinned him to the earth. In this condition, and in his dying agonies, the Highlander writhed himself upwards on the spear, and exerted his last strength in fetching a sweeping blow at the armed knight with his two-handed sword. The stroke, made with all the last energies of a dying man, cut through Lindsay's stirrup and steel-boot, and though it did not sever his leg from his body, yet wounded him so severely as to oblige him to quit the field.

It happened, fortunately perhaps for the Lowlands, that the wild Highlanders were as much addicted to quarrel with each other as with their neighbours. Two clans, or

rather two leagues or confederacies, composed each of several separate clans, fell into such deadly feud with each other, as filled the whole neighbourhood with slaughter and discord.

When this feud or quarrel could be no otherwise ended, it was resolved the difference should be decided by a combat of thirty men of the Clan Chattan, against the same number of the Clan Kay; that the battle should take place on the North Inch of Perth, a beautiful and level meadow, in part surrounded by the river Tay; and that it should be fought in presence of the King and his nobles. Now, there was a cruel policy in this arrangement; for it was to be supposed that all the best and leading men of each clan would desire to be among the thirty which were to fight for their honour, and it was no less to be expected that the battle would be very bloody and desperate. Thus, the probable event would be, that both clans, having lost very many of their best and bravest men, would be more easily managed in future. Such was probably the

view of the King and his counsellors in permitting this desperate conflict, which, however, was much in the spirit of the times.

The parties on each side were drawn out, armed with sword and target, axe and dagger, and stood looking on each other with fierce and savage aspects, when, just as the signal for fight was expected, the commander of the Clan Chattan perceived that one of his men, whose heart had failed him, had deserted his standard. There was no time to seek another man from the clan, so the chieftain, as his only resource, was obliged to offer a reward to any one who would fight in the room of the fugitive. Perhaps you think it might be difficult to get a man, who, for a small hire, would undergo the perils of a battle which was likely to be so obstinate and deadly. But in that fighting age, men valued their lives lightly. One Henry Wynd, a citizen of Perth, and a saddler by trade, a little bandy-legged man, but of great strength and activity, and well accustomed to use the broad-sword, offered himself, for half a French crown, to serve

on the part of the Clan Chattan in the battle of that day.

The signal was then given by sound of the royal trumpets, and of the great war bagpipes of the Highlanders, and the two parties fell on each other with the utmost fury, their natural ferocity of temper being excited by feudal hatred against the hostile clan, zeal for the honour of their own, and a consciousness that they were fighting in presence of the King and nobles of Scotland. As they fought with the two-handed sword and axe, the wounds they inflicted on each other were of a ghastly size and character. Heads were cloven asunder, limbs were lopped from the trunk. The meadow was soon flooded with blood, and covered with dead and wounded men.

In the midst of the deadly conflict, the chieftain of the Clan Chattan observed that Henry Wynd, after he had slain one of the Clan Kay, drew aside, and did not seem willing to fight more.

"How is this," said he, "art thou afraid?"

"Not I," answered Henry; "but I have done enough of work for half-a-crown."

"Forward and fight," said the Highland chief; "he that doth not grudge his day's work, I will not stint him in his wages."

Thus encouraged, Henry Wynd again plunged into the conflict, and, by his excellence as a swordsman, contributed a great deal to the victory, which at length fell to the Clan Chattan. Ten of the victors, with Henry Wynd, whom the Highlanders called the *Gow Chrom*, (that is, the crooked or bandy-legged smith, though he was a saddler, for war-saddles were then made of steel,) were left alive, but they were all wounded. Only one of the Clan Kay survived, and he was unhurt. But this single individual dared not oppose himself to eleven men, though all more or less hurt, but throwing himself into the Tay, swam to the other side, and went off to carry to the Highlands the news of his clan's defeat. It is said, he was so ill received by his kinsmen that he put himself to death.

Some part of the above story is matter of tradition, but the general fact is certain. Henry Wynd was rewarded to the Highland chieftain's best abilities; but it was remarked, that, when the battle was over, he was not able to tell the name of the clan he fought for, replying, when asked on which side he had been, that he was fighting for his own hand. Hence the proverb, "Every man for his own hand, as Harry Wynd fought."

In the meantime troubles, to which we have formerly alluded, broke out in the family of Robert III. The King had been lamed in early youth by the kick of a horse, which had prevented his engaging in war. He was by disposition peaceful, religious, and just, but not firm of mind, and easily imposed on by those about him, and particularly by his brother the Duke of Albany, a man of an enterprising character, but crafty, ambitious, and cruel.

This Prince, the next heir to the crown, if the King's children could be displaced,

continued to sow strife and animosity betwixt his father and the Duke of Rothsay, the eldest son of Robert III., and heir to his kingdom. Rothsay was young, gay, and irregular, his father old, and strict in his principles; occasions of quarrel easily arose betwixt them, and Albany represented the conduct of the son to the father in the worst light.

The King and Queen seem to have been of opinion, that the marriage of the Prince might put an end to his idle and licentious course of life. But Albany, whom they consulted, conducted this important affair in a manner disgraceful to the Royal Family. He proceeded upon the principle, that the Prince should marry the daughter of the Scottish noble who was willing to pay the largest sum of money for the honour of connecting himself with the royal family. The powerful George Earl of March, was at first the largest offerer. But although the Prince was contracted to the daughter of that nobleman, yet the match was broken off by Albany, when a still larger sum was

offered by the Earl of Douglas, who, having himself married the King's sister, was now desirous that their daughter should wed the heir of the throne. They were married accordingly, but in an evil hour.

The Prince continued to give offence by the levity of his conduct; Albany continued to pour his complaints into the King's ear, and Douglas became also the enemy of his royal son-in-law.

The history of this reign being imperfect, we do not distinctly know what charges were brought against the Duke of Rothsay, or how far they were true or false. But it seems certain that he was delivered up by his father to the power of his uncle of Albany, and his father-in-law the Earl of Douglas, who treated him with the utmost cruelty.

A villain named Ramorgny, with the assistance of Sir William Lindsay, was furnished with a warrant for apprehending and confining the person of the heir apparent of Scotland. Armed with this authority, they seized upon him as he was jour-

neying in Fife, without any suspicion—placed him upon an ordinary work-horse, and conducted him to the strong tower, or castle, of Falkland, belonging to Albany. It was a heavy fall of rain, but the poor Prince was allowed no other shelter than a peasant's cloak. When in that gloomy fortress, he was thrown into a dungeon and deprived of food. It is said that one woman, touched with his lamentations, contrived to bring him from time to time thin barley cakes, concealed in her veil, which she passed through the bars of his prison; and that another woman supplied him with milk from her own bosom. Both were discovered, and what scanty resources their charity could afford were intercepted, and the unhappy Prince died in the month of March 1402, of famine, the most severe and lingering mode among the many by which life may be ended.

There is no evidence that the old King, infirm and simple-minded as he was, suspected the foul play which his son had re-

ceived; but the vengeance of God seemed to menace the country in which such a tragedy had been acted. The Earl of March, incensed at the breach of the contract betwixt his daughter and the Prince, deserted the Scottish cause, and embraced that of England. He fled to Northumberland, and from thence made repeated incursions upon the Scottish frontier.

The Earl of Douglas, placing himself at the head of ten thousand men, made an incursion into England, with banner displayed, and took great spoil. But he was waylaid in returning by the celebrated Hotspur, who, with George of March and others, had assembled a numerous army. Douglas took his ground on an eminence called Homildon, where his numerous ranks were exposed to the English arrows, with the same infatuation as had been displayed at so many other battles, the Scots suffering great loss, for which they were unable to repay the enemy. While they were thus sustaining a dreadfully unequal combat, a bold

Scottish knight, named Sir John Swinton, called with a loud voice, "Why do we remain here on this hillside, to be shot like stags with arrows, when we might rush down upon the English, and dispute the combat hand to hand?" There was a young nobleman in the host, called the Lord of Gordon. The person living whom he most detested was this same Sir John Swinton, because in some private quarrel he had slain Gordon's father. But when he heard him give such resolute and brave advice in that dreadful extremity, he required to be made a knight at Swinton's hand; "for," said he, "from the hand of no wiser leader or braver man can I ask that honour." Swinton granted his prayer, and that done, he and Gordon rushed down side by side with their followers, and made considerable slaughter amongst the English. But not being supported by other chiefs, they were overpowered and cut to pieces. The Scots lost the battle, sustaining a total defeat; and Douglas, wounded, and having lost an eye, fell into the hands of the English as a prisoner.

A singular train of events followed, which belong rather to English than Scottish history, but which it is proper you should know. The Earl of Northumberland, father to Hotspur, had determined to rebel against Henry IV., then King of England. To strengthen their forces, they gave Douglas his liberty, and engaged him to assist them in the civil war which was impending. Douglas came accordingly with a band of his countrymen, and joined Henry Percy, called Hotspur. They marched together into England, and fought a memorable battle with the royal forces, near Shrewsbury. As Henry IV. was personally present in the battle, Douglas resolved to seek him out, and end the contest by killing or making him prisoner. The King had, however, several other champions in the field, armed and mounted exactly like himself. Of these, Douglas killed no less than three, exclaiming with amazement, as they appeared one after another; so that when at length he encountered the real king, he called out, "Where the devil do all these kings come

from?" He attacked Henry himself with the same fury with which he had assaulted those who represented him, overthrew the royal banner, slaying a valiant knight, Sir Thomas Blunt, to whose care it had been committed, and was about to kill the King. But numbers, and especially the valiant Prince of Wales, his son, came to the King of England's assistance; and before Douglas could fight his way forward to Henry, Hotspur was killed by an arrow-shot, and his party were obliged to fly. Douglas at length condescended to fly also, but his horse stumbling in ascending a hill, he was again wounded and taken.

We return to poor King Robert, who was now exhausted by age, infirmities, and family calamity. He had still a remaining son, called James, about eleven years old, and he was probably afraid to intrust him to the keeping of Albany, as his death would have rendered that ambitious Prince next heir to the throne. He resolved, therefore, to send the young Prince to France, under pretence that he would receive a bet-

ter education there than Scotland could afford him. An English vessel took that on board of which the Prince was sailing to France, and James was sent to London. When Henry heard that the Prince of Scotland was in his power, he resolved to detain him a prisoner. This was very unjust, for the countries of England and Scotland were at peace together at the time. The King sent him to prison, however, saying, that "the Prince would be as well educated at his court as that of France, for that he understood French well." This was said in mockery, but Henry kept his word in this point; and though the Scottish Prince was confined unjustly, he received an excellent education at the expense of the English monarch.

This new misfortune, which placed the only remaining son of the poor old King in the hands of the English, seems to have broken the heart of Robert the Third, who died about a year afterwards, overwhelmed with calamities and infirmity.

CHAP. VI.

Regency of Robert, Duke of Albany—Battle of Harlaw—Regency of Murdac, Duke of Albany—Exploits of the Scots in France—Deliverance of James the First from his Captivity in England.

ALBANY, the brother of Robert III., was now Regent of the kingdom, of which he had long possessed the supreme government. He was, it may be supposed, in no great hurry to obtain the release of his nephew Prince James, whose return to Scotland must have ended his own power. He was, as we have seen, a wicked, cruel, and ambitious man; yet he was regular in administering justice, and took great care not to lay any taxes on the people.

Jedburgh Castle, which the English had kept ever since the battle of Durham, had been taken by the Teviotdale Borderers and it was proposed that it should be pul ed down, in order that it might not agai. afford the enemy a stronghold on the fron tiers. To maintain the men engaged i demolishing this large and strong fortress, it was proposed to lay a small tax of two pennies on each hearth in Scotland, to defray the expense. But the Regent determined to pay it out of his own and the King's revenue, resolved, as he said, that he would not begin his regency by a measure which must afflict the poor.

In other respects, Albany was an unworthy character. He was not even brave, which was a failing uncommon in his age and family; and though he engaged in several wars with England, he did not gain either honour or success in any of them.

One of the most remarkable events during his government was the battle of Harlaw. This was fought by a prince called Donald

of the Isles, who possessed all the islands on the west side of Scotland. He was also the proprietor of great estates on the mainland, and aspired to the style of an independent sovereign.

This Donald, in the year 1411, laid claim to the Earldom of Ross, then vacant, which the Regent had determined to bestow on a member of his own family. Donald of the Isles raised ten thousand men, all Highlanders like himself, and invading the north of Scotland, came as far as a place called Harlaw, about ten miles from Aberdeen. Here he was encountered by the Earl of Mar, at the head of an inferior army, but composed of Lowland gentlemen, better armed and disciplined than the followers of Donald. A most desperate battle ensued, in which both parties suffered great loss. On that of Donald, the chiefs of the clans, called Macintosh and Maclean, were both slain, with about a thousand men. Mar lost about five hundred brave gentlemen, amongst them Ogil-

vy, Scrymgeour, Irvine of Drum, and other men of rank. But the Highlanders had the worst, and were obliged to retreat after the battle. This was fortunate for Scotland, since otherwise the Highlanders, at that time a wild and barbarous people, would have overrun, and perhaps actually conquered, a great part of the civilized country. The battle of Harlaw was long remembered, owing to the bravery with which the field was disputed.

The Regent Albany died in 1419. He was succeeded in his high office by his son Murdac, Duke of Albany, a man who had neither the vices nor the virtues of his father. Duke Robert was active, crafty, suspicious, and, in one sense at least, wise. The son was indulgent, indolent, and at the same time simple and easy to be imposed upon. Many quarrels and feuds broke out in the country, and even in his own family, which had been suppressed by the strong hand of his father. Little memorable took place in the regency of Murdac, but it was

remarkable for the great renown which the Scots won in the wars of France.

I have told you how a body of French knights came to Scotland to assist the Scottish against the English; and you must now know how the Scottish repaid the obligation by sending over a body of men to assist Charles, King of France, who was in great danger of being completely conquered by Henry V. of England, who seemed on the point of expelling him from the kingdom, and possessing himself of the crown of France. A small army of about six or seven thousand chosen men had gone to France, under the command of John Stewart, Earl of Buchan, the second son of the Regent Robert, Duke of Albany. He had under him Lindsay, Swinton, and other men of consequence and of fame. They gained an important victory over the English, then under command of the Duke of Clarence, brother to Henry V. This Prince, hearing that there was a body of Scots encamped at a town called Baugé, and enraged that the Scots should not only

defend their own country from the English, but also come over to give them trouble in France, made a hasty march to surprise them. He left behind him those celebrated archers, who had usually afforded the English means of conquest over the enemy, because he relied upon the rapidity of his motions, as he understood the Scots were observing indifferent discipline, and not keeping a vigilant watch. He arrived at Baugé, followed only by the knights and men-at-arms on horseback. Having forced the passage of a bridge, Clarence was pressing forward at the head of his cavalry, distinguished by the richness of his armour, and by a rich golden coronet which he wore over his helmet. At this moment the Scottish knights charged the enemy. Sir John Swinton galloped against the Duke of Clarence, and unhorsed him with his lance, and the Earl of Buchan dashed out his brains with a battle-axe or mace. A great many English knights and nobles were slain at this rencounter, 22d March 1421. The French

King, to reward the valour of the Scots, created the Earl of Buchan Constable of France, (one of the highest offices in the kingdom,) and Count of Aubigny.

The Scots, incited by the renown and wealth which their countrymen had acquired, came over to France in greater numbers, and the Earl of Douglas himself was tempted to bring over a little army, in which the best and noblest of the gentlemen of the south of Scotland of course enrolled themselves. They who did not go themselves, sent their sons and brothers. Sir Alexander Home of Home had intended to take this course; and his brother, David Home of Wedderburn, was equipped for the expedition. The chief himself came down to the vessel to see Douglas and his brother embark. But when the Earl saw his old companion in arms about to take leave of him, he said, "Ah! Sir Alexander, who would have thought that thou and I should ever have parted?"

"Neither will we part now, my lord," said Sir Alexander; and suddenly changing his purpose, he sent back his brother David to take care of his castle, family, and estate, and going to France with his old friend, died with him at the battle of Verneuil.

The Earl of Douglas, whose military fame was so great, received high honours from the King of France, and was created Duke of Touraine. The Earl was used to ridicule the Duke of Bedford, who then acted as Regent for Henry VI. in France, and gave him the nickname of *John with the leaden sword.* Upon the 17th August 1424, Douglas received a message from the Duke of Bedford, that he intended to come and dine and drink wine with him. Douglas well understood the nature of the visit, and sent back word that he should be welcome. The Scots and French prepared for battle, but the Earl of Douglas, who considered their situation as favourable, recommended that they should receive the attack of the English, instead of advancing to meet them.

The French Count de Narbonne, however, insisted that they should attack, instead of remaining in their position; and putting the French in motion, declared he would advance to the fight whether the Scots did so or not. Douglas was thus compelled to advance likewise, but it was in disorder. The English archers in the meantime showered their arrows on the French; their men-at-arms charged; and a total rout of the allied army was the consequence. Douglas and Buchan stood their ground, fought desperately, and died nobly. Home, Lindsay, Swinton, and far the greater part of that brave Scottish band of auxiliaries, were killed on the spot.

The great Earl of Douglas, who was slain at Verneuil, was distinguished from the rest of his family by the name of *Tine-man*, that is, *Lose-man*, as he was defeated in the great battles of Homildon, Shrewsbury, and finally in that of Verneuil, where he lost his life. His contemporary and rival, George Earl of March, was as remarkable for being for-

tunate; for whether he fought on the Scottish or English side, his party was always victorious. The slender remains of the Scottish forces were adopted by Charles of France as a life-guard; an establishment which was continued for a great many years.

We return now to Scotland, where the Regent Murdac of Albany was so far from being able to guide the affairs of the state, that he could not control his own sons. There were two of them, haughty, licentious young men, who respected neither the authority of God nor man, and that of their father least of all. Their misbehaviour was so great, that Murdac began to think of putting an end to their bad conduct and his own government at the same time, by obtaining the deliverance of the King from English captivity. A singular piece of insolence, on the part of his eldest son, is said to have determined him to this measure.

At this time the amusement of hawking (that is, of taking birds of game by means

of trained hawks) was a pastime greatly esteemed by the nobility. The Regent Murdac had one falcon of peculiar excellence, which he valued. His eldest son, Walter Stewart, had often asked this bird of his father, and been as often denied. At length one day when the Regent had the hawk sitting upon his wrist, in the way that falconers carry such birds, Walter renewed his importunity about the falcon; and when his father again refused it, he snatched it from his wrist, and wrung its neck round. His father, greatly offended at so gross an insult, said, in his anger, "Since thou wilt give me neither reverence nor obedience, I will fetch home one whom we must all obey." From that moment, he began to bargain with the English in good earnest that they should restore James, now King of Scotland, to his own dominions.

The English government were [illegible] unwilling to deliver up James, the rather that he had fallen in love with Joan, the Earl of So-

merset's daughter, nearly related to the royal family of England. They considered that this alliance would incline the young Prince to peace with England; and that the education which he had received, and the friendships which he had formed in that country, would incline him to be a good and peaceable neighbour. The Scots agreed to pay a considerable ransom, and upon these terms James, the first of that name, was set at liberty, and returned to become King in Scotland, after eighteen years' captivity.

CHAP. VII.

Accession of James I.—Execution of Murdac, Duke of Albany—State of the Highlands—Conspiracy against, and Murder of, James I.—Punishment of the Conspirators.

THIS King James the First was also the first of his unfortunate family who showed a high degree of talent. Robert II. and Robert III., his father and grandfather, were both rather amiable as individuals than respected for their endowments as monarchs. But James had received an excellent education, of which his talents had enabled him to make the best use. He was also prudent and just, consulted the interests of his people, and endeavoured, as far as he could,

to repress those evils, which had grown up through the partial government of Robert Duke of Albany, the rule of the feeble and slothful Duke Murdac, and the vicious and violent conduct of his sons.

The first vengeance of the laws fell upon Murdac, who, with his two sons, was tried and condemned at Stirling for abuse of the King's authority, committed while Murdac was Regent. They were beheaded at the little eminence at Stirling, which is still shown on the Castle-hill. The Regent from that elevated spot might have a distant view of the magnificent Castle of Doune, which he had built for his residence; and the sons had ample reason to regret their contempt of their father's authority, and to judge the truth of his words, when he said he would bring in one who would rule them all.

James afterwards turned his cares to the Highlands, which were in a state of terrible confusion. He marched into those disturbed districts with a strong army, and seized upon more than forty of the chiefs, by whom

these broils and quarrels were countenanced, put many of them to death, and obliged others to find security that they would be quiet in future. Alaster Macdonald, Lord of the Isles, endeavoured to oppose the royal authority; but the measures taken against him by James reduced his power so much, that he was at last obliged to submit to the King's mercy. For this purpose the humbled chief came to Edinburgh secretly, and suddenly appeared in the Cathedral Church, where the King was employed in his devotions upon Easter-day. He was without bonnet, armour, or ornaments, had his legs and arms bare, and his body only covered with a plaid. In this condition he submitted himself to the King's pleasure; and holding a naked sword in his hand by the point, he offered the hilt to the King, in token of his unreserved submission. James forgave him his repeated offences, at the intercession of the Queen and nobles present, but he detained him a prisoner in the strong Castle of Tantallon, in East Lothian. Yet,

after this submission of their principal chief, the West Highlanders and people of the Isles again revolted, under the command of Donald Balloch, the kinsman of Alaster, who landed on the mainland with a considerable force, and defeated the Earls of Mar and of Caithness with great slaughter; but when he heard that James was coming against him, Donald thought it best to retreat to Ireland. James put to death many of his followers. Donald himself was afterwards killed in Ireland, and his head sent to the King.

There is another story, which will show the cruelty and ferocity of these Highland robbers. Another Macdonald, head of a band in Ross-shire, had plundered a poor widow woman, who, in her anger, exclaimed repeatedly that she would go to the King for redress, should she travel to Edinburgh to seek him. "It is a long journey," answered the barbarian; "and that you may perform it the better, I will have you shod for the occasion." Accordingly, he caused

a smith to nail shoes to the poor woman's feet, as if they had been those of a horse. The widow, however, being a woman of high spirit, was determined to keep her word; and as soon as her wounds permitted her to travel, she did actually go on foot to Edinburgh, and, throwing herself before James, acquainted him with the cruelty which had been exercised on her. James, in great resentment, caused Macdonald, and twelve of his principal followers, to be seized, and to have their feet shod with iron-shoes, in which condition they were exhibited to the public for three days, and then executed.

Thus James I. restored a considerable degree of tranquillity to the country, which he found in such a distracted state. He made wise laws for regulating the commerce of the nation, both at home and with other states, and strict regulations for the administration of justice betwixt those who had complaints against one another.

But his greatest labour, and that which he found most difficult to accomplish, was

to diminish the power of the great nobles, who ruled like so many kings, each on his own territory and estate, and made war on the King, or upon one another, whenever it was their pleasure to do so. Accordingly, he had several of these great persons brought to trial, and, upon their being found guilty, deprived them of their estates. The nobles complained that this was done out of spite against them, and that they were treated with hardship and injustice; and thus discontents were entertained against this good Prince. Another cause of offence was, that to maintain justice, and support the authority of the throne, it was found necessary that some taxes for this purpose should be raised from the subjects; and the Scottish people being poor, and totally unaccustomed to pay any such contributions, they imputed this odious measure to the King's avarice. And thus, though King James was so well-intentioned a king, and certainly the ablest who had reigned in Scotland since the days of Robert Bruce, yet both the high

and the low murmured against him, which encouraged some wicked men amongst the nobility to conspire his death.

The chief person in the plot was one Sir Robert Graham, uncle to the Earl of Strathearne. He was bold and ambitious, and highly offended with the King on account of an imprisonment, which he had sustained by the royal command. He drew into the plot the Earl of Athole, an old man of little talent, by promising to make his son Sir Robert Stewart, King of Scotland, in place of James. Others were brought into the conspiracy from different motives. To many of their attendants they pretended they only wished to carry away a lady out of the court. To prepare his scheme, Graham retreated into the remote Highlands, and from thence sent a defiance, renouncing his allegiance to the King, and threatening to put his sovereign to death with his own hand. A price was set upon his head, payable to any one who should deliver him up to justice; but

he lay concealed in the wild mountains to prosecute his revenge against James.

The Christmas preceding his murder was appointed by the King for holding a feast at Perth. In his way to that town he was met by a Highland woman, calling herself a prophetess. She stood by the side of the ferry by which he was about to travel to the north, and cried with a loud voice,—"My Lord the King, if you pass this water, you will never return again alive." The King was struck with this for a moment, because he had read in a book that a king should be slain that year in Scotland; for it often happens, that when a remarkable deed is in agitation, rumours of it get abroad, and are repeated under pretence of prophecies; but which are, in truth, only conjectures of that which seems likely to happen. There was a knight in the court, on whom the King had conferred the name of the King of Love, to whom the King said in jest,—"There is a prophecy that a king shall be killed in Scotland this year; now, Sir Alexander, that must concern either

you or me, since we two are the only kings in Scotland." Other circumstances occurred, which might have prevented the good King's murder, but none of them were attended to. The King, while at Perth, took up his residence in an abbey of Black-Friars, there being no castle or palace in the town convenient for his residence; and this made the execution of the conspiracy more easy, as his guards were quartered among the citizens.

The day had been spent by the King in sport and feasting, and by the conspirators in preparing for their enterprise. They had destroyed the locks of the doors of the apartment, so that the keys could not be turned; and they had taken away the bars with which the gates were secured, and had provided planks by way of bridges, on which to cross the ditch which surrounded the monastery. At length, on the 20th February 1437, all was prepared for carrying their treasonable purpose into execution, and Graham came from his hiding-place in the neighbouring moun-

tains, with a party of nigh three hundred men, and entered the gardens of the convent.

The King was in his night-gown and slippers. He had passed the evening gaily with the nobles and ladies of his court, in reading romances, and in singing and music, or playing at chess and tables. The Earl of Athole, and his son Sir Robert Stewart, who expected to succeed James on the throne, were among the last courtiers who retired. At this time James remained standing before the fire, and conversing gaily with the Queen and her ladies before he went to rest. The Highland woman before mentioned again demanded permission to speak with the King, but was refused, on account of the untimeliness of the hour. All now were ordered to withdraw.

At this moment there was a noise and clashing heard, as of men in armour, and the torches in the garden cast up great flashes of light against the windows. The King then recollected his deadly enemy, Sir

Robert Graham, and guessed that he was coming to murder him. He called to the ladies who were left in the chamber to keep the door as well as they could, in order to give him time to escape. He first tried to get out at the windows, but they were fast barred, and defied his strength. By help of the tongs, which were in the chimney, he raised, however, a plank, and let himself down beneath into a narrow vault, used as a common sewer. This had formerly had an opening into the court of the convent, by which he might have made his escape. But all things turned against the unfortunate James; for, two or three days before, he had caused the opening to be built up, because, when he played at ball, the ball used to roll into the vault through that hole.

While the King was in this place of concealment, the conspirators were seeking him through the convent, and, at length, came to the room where the ladies were. The Queen and her women endeavoured, as well as they might, to keep the door shut, and

one of them, Catherine Douglas, boldly thrust her own arm across the door, instead of the bar, which had been taken away, as I told you. But the brave lady's arm was soon broken, and the traitors rushed into the room with swords and daggers drawn, hurting and throwing down such of the women as opposed them. The poor Queen stood half undressed, shricking aloud, and one of the assassins would have slain her, had it not been for a son of Sir Robert Graham, who said to him, "What would you do to the Queen? She is but a woman—Let us seek the King."

They accordingly commenced a minute search, but without any success; so they left the apartment, and sought elsewhere about the monastery. In the meanwhile the King turned impatient, and desired the ladies to help him out of the inconvenient lurking place. At this unlucky moment the conspirators returned, one of them having recollected that there was such a vault, and that they had not searched it. And when they

tore up the plank, and saw the King standing beneath in the vault, one of them called to the others, "Sirs, I have found the bride, for whom we have been seeking all night." Then, first one, and then another of the villains, brethren of the name of Hall, descended into the vault, with daggers drawn, to have dispatched the unfortunate King, who was standing there in his shirt, without weapons of any kind. But James, who was an active and strong man, threw them both down beneath his feet, and struggled to have got a dagger from one or other of them, in which his hands were severely cut and mangled. Then Sir Robert Graham himself sprung down on the King, who, finding no further defence possible, asked him for mercy, and for leisure to confess his sins to a priest. But Graham replied fiercely, "Thou never hadst mercy on those of thine own blood, nor any one else, therefore thou shalt find no mercy here; and as for a confessor, thou shalt have none but this sword." So speaking, he thrust the sword

through the King's body. And yet it is said, that when he saw his Prince lying bleeding under his feet, he was desirous to have left the enterprise unfinished; but the other conspirators called on Graham to kill the King, otherwise he should himself die by their hands; upon which Graham, with the two men who had descended into the vault before him, fell on the unhappy Prince with their daggers, and slew him by many stabs. There were sixteen wounds in his breast alone.

By this time, but too late, news of this outrage had reached the town, and the household servants of the King, with the people inhabiting the town of Perth, were hastening to the rescue, with torches and weapons. The traitors accordingly caught the alarm, and retreated into the Highlands, losing in their flight only one or two, taken or slain by the pursuers. When they spoke about their enterprise among themselves, they greatly regretted that they had not killed the Queen along with her husband,

fearing that she would be active and inexorable in her vengeance.

Indeed their apprehensions were justified by the event, for Queen Joanna made so strict search after the villainous assassins, that in the course of a month, most of them were thrown into prison, and being tried and condemned, they were put to death with new and hideous tortures. The flesh of Robert Stewart, and of a private chamberlain of the King, was torn from their bodies with pincers; while, even in the midst of these horrible agonies, they confessed the justice of their sentence. The Earl of Athole was beheaded, denying at his death that he had consented to the conspiracy, though he admitted that his son had told him of it, to which he had replied, by enjoining him to have no concern in so great a crime. Sir Robert Graham, who was the person with whom the cruel scheme had origin, spoke in defence of it to the last. He had a right to slay the King, he said, for he had renounced his allegiance, and

declared war against him; and he expressed his belief, that his memory would be honoured for putting to death so cruel a tyrant. He was tortured in the most dreadful manner before his final execution, and his son was slain before his eyes, whilst he was yet living.

Notwithstanding the greatness of their crime, it was barbarous cruelty to torture these wretched murderers in the manner we have mentioned. But the people were much incensed against them; for though they had murmured against King James while he lived, yet the dismal manner of his death, and the sense that his intentions towards his people were kind and just, caused him to be much regretted. He had also many popular qualities. His face was handsome, and his person strong and active. His mind was well cultivated with ornamental and elegant accomplishments, as well as stored with useful information. He understood music and poetry, and wrote verses, both serious and comic, which are still preserved.

and read with interest and entertainment by those who understand the ancient language in which they are composed. The murderer Graham was so far from being remembered with honour for the assassination which he had committed, that his memory was execrated in a popular rhyme, then generally current :—

Robert Graham,
That slew our King,
God give him shame.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Reign of James II.; the Wars with the Douglasses, and the King's Death.

When James I. was murdered, his son and heir, James II., was only six years old; so that Scotland was once more plunged into all the discord and confusions of a regency, which were sure to reach their height in a country where even the undisputed sway of a Sovereign of mature age was not held in due respect, and often disturbed by treason and rebellion.

The affairs of the kingdom, during the minority of James II., were chiefly managed by two statesmen, who seem to have been men of considerable personal talent but very little principle or integrity. Sir Alexander Livingston was guardian of the

King's person—Sir William Crichton was Chancellor of the kingdom. They debated betwixt themselves the degree of authority attached to their respective offices, and at once engaged in quarrels with each other, and with one who was more powerful than either of them—the great Earl of Douglas.

That mighty house was now at the highest pitch of its greatness. The Earl possessed Galloway, Annandale, and other extensive properties in the south of Scotland, where almost all the inferior nobility and gentry acknowledged him as their patron and lord. Thus the Douglasses had at their disposal that part of Scotland, which, from its constant wars with England, was most disciplined and accustomed to arms. They possessed the duchy of Touraine and lordship of Longueville in France, and they were connected by intermarriage with the Scottish royal family

The Douglasses were not only powerful from the extent of lands and territories, but also from the possession of great mili-

tary talents, which seemed to pass from father to son, and occasioned a proverb, still remembered in Scotland—

> So many, so good, as of the Douglasses have been,
> Of one sirname in Scotland never yet were seen.

Unfortunately, their power, courage, and military skill, were attended with arrogance and ambition, and the Douglasses seemed to have claimed to themselves the rank and authority of sovereign princes, independent of the laws of the country, and of the allegiance due to the sovereign. It was a common thing for them to ride with a retinue of a thousand horse; and as Archibald, the Earl of Douglas of the time, rendered but an imperfect allegiance even to the severe rule of James I., it may be imagined that his power could not be easily restrained by such men as Crichton and Livingston—great, indeed, through the high offices which they held, but otherwise of a degree far inferior to that of Douglas.

But when this powerful nobleman died, in 1438, and was succeeded by his son, a

youth of only sixteen years old, the wily Crichton began to spy an occasion to crush the Douglasses, as he hoped, for ever, by the destruction of the youthful Earl and his brother, and for abating, by this cruel and unmerited punishment, the power and pride of this great family. Crichton proposed to Livingston to join him in this meditated treachery, and, though enemies to each other, the Guardian of the King and the Chancellor of the kingdom united in the vile project of cutting off two boys, whose age alone showed their innocence of the guilt charged upon them. For this purpose flattery and fair words were used to induce William, the youthful Earl of Douglas, and his brother David, with some of their nearest friends, to come to court, and it was pretended that they would be suitable companions and intimates for the young King. An old adherent of the family greatly dissuaded the Earl from accepting this invitation, and exhorted him, if he went to Edinburgh in person, to leave at

least his brother David behind him. But the young Earl, thinking that no treachery was intended, could not be diverted from the fatal journey.

The Chancellor Crichton received the Earl of Douglas and his brother on their journey, at his own castle of Crichton, and with the utmost appearance of hospitality and kindness. After remaining a day or two at this place, the two brothers were inveigled to Edinburgh Castle, and introduced to the young King, who, not knowing the further purpose of his guardians, received them with affability, and seemed delighted with the prospect of enjoying their society.

On a sudden the scene began to change. At an entertainment which was served up to the Earl and his brother, the head of a black bull was placed on the table. The Douglasses knew this, according to a custom which prevailed in Scotland, to be the sign of death, and leaped from the table in great dismay. But they were seized by armed

men who entered the apartment. They underwent a mock trial, in which all the insolencies of their ancestors were charged against them, and were condemned to immediate execution. The young King wept, and implored Livingston and Crichton to show them mercy, but in vain. They were led out to the court of the Castle, and beheaded without delay. Malcolm Fleming of Cumbernauld, a faithful adherent of their house, shared the same fate.

This barbarous proceeding was as unwise as it was unjust. It did not reduce the power of the Douglasses, but only raised general detestation against those who managed the affairs of James II. A fat, quiet, peaceable person, called James the Gross, indolent from habit of body and temper of mind, became Earl of Douglas, which was probably the reason that no public commotion immediately attended on the murder of the two brothers. But this corpulent dignitary lived only two years, and was in his turn succeeded by his son Archibald, who was as

active and turbulent as any of his ambitious predecessors, and engaged in various civil broils for the purpose of revenging the death of his kinsmen.

James the Second, in the meanwhile, came to man's estate, and entered on the management of public affairs. He was a handsome man, but his countenance was marked on one side with a broad red spot, which gained him the surname of James with the fiery face. They might have called him James with the fiery temper, in like manner; for, with many good qualities, he had a hot and impetuous disposition, of which we shall presently see a remarkable instance.

In the beginning of his administration, James employed the assistance of the Earl of Douglas, as lieutenant-general of the kingdom. But that ambitious nobleman was soon disposed to extend his authority to independent power, and the King found it necessary to take from him the dangerous office with which he had intrusted him.

Douglas retired to his own castle meditating revenge, whilst the King, on the other hand, looked around for some fitting opportunity of diminishing the power of so formidable a rival.

Douglas was not long of showing his total contempt of the King's authority, and his power of acting for himself.—One of his friends and followers, named Auchinleck, had been slain by the Lord Colville. The criminal certainly deserved punishment, but it ought to have been inflicted by the regular magistrates of the Crown, not by the arbitrary pleasure of a private baron, however great and powerful. Douglas, however, took up the matter as a wrong done to himself, and revenged it by his own authority. He marched a large body of his forces against the Lord Colville, stormed his castle, and put every person within it to death. The King was unable to avenge this insult to his authority.

In like manner, Douglas connived at and encouraged some of his followers in Annan

dale to ravage and plunder the lands of Sir John Herries, a person of that country, eminently attached to the King. Herries, a man of high spirit and considerable power, retaliated, by wasting the lands of those who had thus injured him. He was defeated and made prisoner by Douglas, who caused him to be executed, although the King sent a positive order, enjoining him to forbear any injury to Herries's person.

But a still more flagrant breach of law, and violation of all respect to the King's authority, happened in the case of Maclellan, the guardian of the young Lord of Bomby, ancestor of the Earls of Kircudbright. This was one of the few men of consequence in Galloway, who, defying the threats of the Earl of Douglas, had refused to join with him against the King. The Earl, incensed at his opposition, suddenly assaulted his castle, made him prisoner, and carried him to the strong castle of Thrieve, in Galloway, situated on an island in the river Dee. The

King took a particular interest in Maclellan's fate, the rather that he was petitioned to interfere in his favour by Sir Patrick Gray, the commander of the royal guard, a gentleman much in James's confidence, and constantly attending on his person, and who was Maclellan's near relative, being his uncle on the mother's side. In order to prevent Maclellan from sharing the fate of Colville and Herries, the King wrote a letter to the Earl of Douglas, entreating as a favour, rather than urging as a command, that he would deliver the person of the Tutor of Bomby, as Maclellan was usually entitled, into the hands of his relative, Sir Patrick Gray.

Sir Patrick himself went with the letter to the Castle of Thrieve. Douglas received him just as he had arisen from dinner, and, with much apparent civility, declined to speak with Gray, on the occasion of his coming, until he also had dined, saying, "It was ill talking between a full man and fasting." But this courtesy was only a

pretence to gain time to do a very cruel action. Guessing that Sir Patrick Gray's visit respected the life of Maclellan, he resolved to hasten his death before opening the King's letter. Thus, while he was feasting Sir Patrick, with every appearance of hospitality, he caused his unhappy kinsman to be led out and beheaded in the court-yard of the Castle.

When the dinner was over, Gray presented the King's letter, which Douglas received, and read over with every testimony of profound respect. He then thanked Sir Patrick for the trouble he had taken in bringing him so gracious a letter from his Sovereign, especially considering he was not at present on good terms with his Majesty. "And," he added, "the King's demand shall instantly be granted, the rather for your sake." The Earl then took Sir Patrick by the hand, and led him to the castle-yard, where the body of Maclellan was still lying.

"Sir Patrick," said he, as his servants

removed the bloody cloth which covered the body, "you have come a little too late—there lies your sister's son—but he wants the head—the body is, however, at your service."

"My lord," said Gray, suppressing his indignation, "if you have taken his head, you may dispose of the body as you will."

But, when he had mounted his horse, which he instantly called for, his resentment broke out, in spite of the dangerous situation in which he was placed:—

"My lord," said he, "if I live, you shall bitterly pay for this day's work."

So saying, he turned his horse and galloped off.

"To horse, and chase him!" said Douglas; and if Gray had not been well mounted, he would, in all probability, have shared the fate of his nephew. He was closely pursued till near Edinburgh, a space of fifty or sixty miles.

Besides these daring and open instances of
 attempt of the King's authority, Douglas

entered into such alliances as plainly showed his determination to destroy entirely the royal government. He formed a league with the Earl of Crawford, called Earl Beardie, who had great power in the counties of Angus, Perth, and Kincardine, and with the Earl of Ross, who possessed extensive and almost royal authority in the north of Scotland, by which these three powerful Earls agreed that they should take each other's part in every quarrel, and against every man, the King himself not excepted.

James then plainly saw that some strong measure must be taken, yet it was not easy to determine what was to be done. The league between the three Earls enabled them, if open war was attempted, to assemble a force superior to that of the crown. The King, therefore, dissembled his resentment, and, under pretext of desiring an amicable conference and reconciliation, requested Douglas to come to the royal court at Stirling. Douglas hesitated to accept of this invitation, and, before he actually did so,

he demanded and obtained a protection, or safe-conduct, under the Great Seal, pledging the King's promise that he should be permitted to come to the court and to return in safety. And the Earl was more confirmed in his purpose of waiting on the King, because he was given to understand that the Chancellor Crichton had retired from court in some disgrace, so that he thought himself secure from the plots of that great enemy of his family.

Thus protected, as he thought, against personal danger, Douglas came to Stirling in the end of February 1452, where he found the King lodged in the Castle of that town, which was and is situated upon a rock rising abruptly from the plain, at the upper end of the town, and only accessible by one gate, which is strongly defended. The numerous followers of Douglas were quartered in the town, but the Earl himself was admitted into the Castle. One of his nearest confidents, and most powerful allies, was James Hamilton of Cadyow,

the head of the great house of Hamilton. This gentleman pressed forward to follow Douglas, as he entered the gate. But Livingston, who was in the Castle with the King, struck Hamilton, who was his near relation, upon the face; and when Hamilton, greatly incensed, rushed on him, sword in hand, he repulsed him with a long lance, till the gates were shut against him. Sir James Hamilton was very angry at this usage at the time, but afterwards knew that Livingston acted a friendly part, in excluding him from the danger into which Douglas was throwing himself.

The King received Douglas kindly, and, after some amiable expostulation with him upon his late conduct, all seemed friendship and cordiality betwixt James and his too powerful subject. Supper was presented at seven o'clock, and after it was over, the King led Douglas into the recess of a window in the apartment, where he came on the subject of the Earl's bond with Ross and Crawford, and exhorted him to give it

up, as inconsistent with his allegiance and the quiet of the kingdom. Douglas declined to relinquish the treaty which he had formed. The King urged him more imperiously, and the Earl returned a haughty and positive refusal, upbraiding the King, at the same time, with mal-administration of the public affairs. Then the King burst into a rage at his obstinacy, and exclaimed, "By Heaven, my lord, if *you* will not break the league, *this* shall." So saying, he wounded the Earl in the breast with his dagger. Sir Patrick Gray, who had sworn revenge on Douglas for the execution of Maclellan, then struck him on the head with a battle-axe, and others of the King's retinue showed their zeal by wounding the dead body. The corpse did not receive any Christian burial. At least, about forty years since, a skeleton was found buried in the garden, just below the fatal window, which was, with much probability, conjectured to be the remains of the Earl of Douglas, who died thus

strangely and unhappily by the hand of his sovereign.

This was a wicked and cruel action on the King's part, bad if it were done in hasty passion, and yet worse if James meditated the possibility of this violence from the beginning, and had determined to use force if Douglas should not yield to persuasion. The Earl had deserved punishment, perhaps even that of death, for many crimes against the state; but the King ought not to have slain him without form of trial, and in his own chamber, after decoying him there under assurance that his person should be safe. Yet this assassination, like that of the Red Comyn at Dumfries, turned to the good of Scotland; for God, my dear [illegible], who is often pleased to bring good out of the follies, and even the crimes of men, rendered the death of Comyn the road to the freedom of Scotland, and that of Douglas the cause of the downfall of the Douglas family, which had become too powerful for the peace of the kingdom.

The scene, however, opened very differently from the manner in which it was to end. There were in the town of Stirling four brethren of the murdered Douglas, who had come to wait on him to court. Upon hearing that their elder brother had died in the manner I have told you, they immediately acknowledged James, the eldest of the four, as his successor in the earldom. They then hastened each to the county where he had interest, for they were all great lords, and, collecting their friends and vassals, they returned to Stirling, dragging the safe-conduct, or passport, which had been granted to the Earl of Douglas, at the tail of a serving-man, in order to show their contempt for the King. They then, with the sound of five hundred horns and trumpets, proclaimed King James a false and perjured man. Afterwards they pillaged the town of Stirling, and, not thinking that enough, they sent back Hamilton of Cadyow to burn it to the ground. But the strength of the Castle defied all their efforts, and after this bravado, the Douglasses dispersed them-

selves to assemble a still larger body of forces.

So many great barons were engaged in alliance with the house of Douglas, that it is said to have been a question in the King's mind, whether he should abide the conflict, or fly to France, and leave the throne to the Earl. At this moment of extreme need, James found a trusty counsellor in his cousin-german, Kennedy, Archbishop of St Andrews, one of the wisest men of his time. The Archbishop showed his advice in a sort of emblem or parable. He gave the King a bunch of arrows tied together with a thong of leather, and asked him to break them. The King said it was beyond his strength. "That may be the case, bound together as they are," replied the Archbishop, "but if you undo the strap and take the arrows one by one, you may easily break them all in succession. And thus, my Liege, you ought in wisdom to deal with the insurgent nobility. If you attack them while they are united in one mind and purpose, they will be too strong for you; but if you can, by

dealing with them separately, prevail on them to abandon their union, you may as easily master them one after the other, as you can break the arrows if you take each singly."

Acting upon this principle, the King made private representations to several of the nobility, to whom his agents found access, showing them that the rebellion of the Douglasses would, if successful, render that family superior to all others in Scotland, and sink the rest of the Peers into men of little consequence. Large gifts of lands, treasures, and honours, were liberally promised to those who, in this moment of extremity, should desert the Douglasses and join the King's party. These large promises, and the secret dread of the great predominance of the Douglas family, drew to the King's side many, that had hitherto wavered betwixt their allegiance and their fear of the Earl.

Among these, the most distinguished was the Earl of Angus, who, although himself a Douglas, being a younger branch of that

family, joined on this memorable occasion with the King against his kinsman, and gave rise to the saying, that "the Red Douglas (such was the complexion of the Angus family) had put down the Black."

The great family of Gordon also declaring for the King, their chief, the Earl of Huntly, collected an army in the north, and marched south as far as Brechin to support the royal authority. Here he was encountered by the Earl of Crawford, who had taken arms for the Douglas party, according to the fatal bond which had cost the Earl William his life. One of the chief leaders in Crawford's army was John Collasse of Bonnymoon, (or Balnamoon,) who commanded a gallant body of men, armed with bills and battle-axes, on which the Earl greatly relied. But before the action, this John Collasse had asked Crawford to grant him certain lands, that lay convenient for him, and near his house, which the Earl refused to do. Collasse, incensed at the refusal, took an opportunity, when the battle was at the closest, to withdraw from the conflict; upon which Craw-

ford's men, who had been on the point of gaining the victory, lost heart, and were defeated. Other battles were fought in different parts of Scotland between the Douglasses and their allies, and those noblemen and gentlemen who favoured the King. Much blood was spilt, and great mischief done to the country. Among other instances of the desolation of these civil wars, the Earl of Huntly burned one half of the town of Elgin, being that part which inclined to the Douglasses, while he left standing the opposite part of the same street, which was inhabited by citizens attached to his own family. Hence the proverb when a thing is imperfectly finished, that it is "Half done, as Elgin was burned." Famine and pestilence came to add to the desolation of the country, wasted by a civil war, which occasioned skirmishes, conflagrations, and slaughters, almost in every province of Scotland.

The royal party at length began to gain ground; for the present Earl of Douglas

seems to have been a man of less action and decision than was usual with those of his name and family. The Earl of Crawford was one of those who first deserted him, and applied to the King for forgiveness and restoration to favour. The King, though he had many subjects of complaint against this powerful lord, and notwithstanding he had made a vow to destroy the Earl's Castle of Finhaven, and to make the highest stone the lowest, nevertheless granted him a full pardon, and made him a visit at Finhaven, where he accomplished his vow, by getting to the top of the battlements and throwing a small stone, which was lying loose there, down into the moat; thus, in one sense, making the highest stone in the house the lowest, though not by the demolition of the place. By this clemency the minds of the hostile nobles were conciliated, and many began to enter into terms of submission.

But the power of the Douglasses remained unbroken, and it was so great that there was little hope that the struggle would be

ended without a desperate battle. At length such an event seemed near approaching. The Earls of Orkney and Angus, acting for the King, had besieged Abercorn, a strong Castle on the Frith of Forth, belonging to the Earl of Douglas. Douglas collected the whole strength which his family and allies could raise, amounting, it is said, to nearly forty thousand men, with which he advanced to raise the siege. The King, on the other hand, having assembled the whole forces of the north of Scotland, advanced to meet Douglas, at the head of an army somewhat superior in numbers to that of the Earl, but inferior in military discipline. Thus everything seemed to render a combat inevitable, the issue of which must have shown whether James Stewart or James Douglas was to wear the Crown of Scotland. The small river of Carron divided the two armies.

But the intrigues of the Archbishop of St Andrews had made a powerful impression upon many of the nobles who acted with Douglas, and there was a party among his

followers, who obeyed him more from fear than affection. Others, seeing a certain degree of uncertainty in Douglas's resolutions, and a want of decision in his actions, began to doubt whether he was a leader fit to conduct so perilous an enterprisé. Amongst these last was Sir James Hamilton of Cadyow, already mentioned; who commanded in Douglas's army three hundred horse, and as many infantry, all men of tried discipline and courage. The Archbishop Kennedy was Hamilton's kinsman, and took advantage of their relationship to send a secret messenger to inform him that the King was well disposed to pardon his rebellion, and to show him great favour, provided that he would at that critical moment renounce the cause of Douglas, and return to the King's obedience. These arguments made considerable impression on Hamilton, who, nevertheless, having been long the friend and follower of the Earl of Douglas, was loath to desert his old friend in such an extremity.

On the next morning after this secret

conference, the King sent a herald to the camp of Douglas, charging him to disperse his followers, on pain that he and his accomplices should be proclaimed traitors, but at the same time promising forgiveness and rewards to all who should leave the rebellious standard of Douglas. Douglas made a mock of this summons; and sounding his trumpets, and placing his men in order, marched stoutly forward to encounter the King's army, who on their side left their camp, and came forward with displayed banners, as if to instant battle. It seems, however, that the message of the herald had made some impression on the followers of Douglas, and perhaps on the Earl himself, by rendering him doubtful of their adherence. He saw, or thought he saw, that his troops were discouraged, and led them back into his camp, hoping to inspire them with more confidence and zeal. But the movement had a different effect; for no sooner had the Earl returned to his tent, than Sir James Hamilton came to expos-

tulate with him, and to require him to say, whether he meant to fight or not, assuring him that every delay was in favour of the King, and that the longer the Earl put off the day of battle, the fewer men he would have to fight it with. Douglas answered contemptuously to Hamilton, that "if he was afraid to stay, he was welcome to go home." Hamilton took the Earl at his word, and leaving the camp of Douglas, went over to the King that very night. The example was so generally followed, that the army of Douglas seemed suddenly to disband itself, and in the morning the Earl had not a hundred men left in his silent and deserted camp, excepting his own immediate followers. He was obliged to fly into Annandale, where his brothers and followers sustained a severe defeat from the Scotts and other Borderers, near a place called Arkinholme. One of the Earl's brothers fell in the battle, another was wounded and made prisoner, and immediately executed. The third escaped into England, where the Earl also found a retreat.

Thus the power of this great and predominant family, which seemed to stand so fair for possessing the crown, fell at length without a struggle; and their greatness, which had been founded upon the loyalty and bravery of the Good Lord James, was destroyed by the rebellious and wavering conduct of the last Earl.

The unfortunate nobleman remained nearly twenty years a banished man in England, and was almost forgotten in his own country until the subsequent reign, when, in 1484, he was defeated and made prisoner, in a small excursion which he had attempted to make upon the frontiers of Annandale. He surrendered to a brother of Kirkpatrick of Closeburn, who, in the Earl's better days, had been his own vassal, and who shed tears at seeing his old master in such a lamentable situation. He even proposed to set him at liberty, and fly with him into England; but Douglas rejected this offer. "I am tired," he said, "of exile; and as there is a reward offered by the King for my head, I had rather it were conferred

on you, who were always faithful to me while I was faithful to myself, than on any one else." Kirkpatrick, however, acted kindly and generously. He secured the Earl in some secret abode, and did not deliver him up to the King until he had a promise of his life. Douglas was then ordained to be put into the Abbey of Lindores, to which sentence he submitted calmly, only using a popular proverb, "He that cannot do better must be a monk." He lived in that convent four years afterwards, and with him, as the last of his family, expired the principal branch of these tremendous Earls of Douglas.

Other Scottish families arose upon their ruins, in consequence of the distribution made of their immense forfeited estates, to those who had assisted the King in suppressing their power. Amongst these the Earl of Angus, who, although kinsman to the Earl of Douglas, had sided with the King, received by far the greater share, to an amount, indeed, which enabled the family, as we shall see, to pursue the same

ambitious course as that of their kinsfolk of the elder branch, although they neither rose to such high elevation, nor sunk into the same irreparable ruin which was the lot of the original family.

Hamilton also rose into power on the fall of the Douglas. His opportune desertion of his kinsman at Abercorn was accounted good service, and was rewarded with large grants of land, and at last with the hand of the King's eldest daughter in marriage.

Sir David Scott of Kirkurd and Buccleuch obtained also great gifts of land for his clan's service and his own, at the battle of Arkinholme, and began that course of greatness which raised his family to the ducal dignity.

Such, my dear child, is the course of the world, in which the downfall of one great man or family is the means of advancing others, as a falling tree throws its seed upon the ground, and causes young plants to arise in its room.

The English did not make much war upon

Scotland during this reign, being engaged at home with their dreadful civil wars of York and Lancaster. For the same reason, perhaps, the Scots had the advantage in the battle of Sark, and in two other actions.

Relieved from the rivalship of the Douglas, and from the pressure of constant war with England, James II. governed Scotland firmly. The kingdom enjoyed considerable tranquillity during his reign; and his last Parliament were able to recommend to him the regular and firm execution of the laws, as to a prince who possessed the full means of discharging his kingly office, without resistance from evil doers or infringers of justice. This was in 1458. But only two years afterwards all these fair hopes were blighted.

The strong Border Castle of Roxburgh had remained in the hands of the English ever since the fatal battle of Durham. The King was determined to recover this bulwark of the kingdom. Breaking through a truce which existed with England at the time,

James summoned together the full force of his kingdom to accomplish this great enterprise. The nobles attended in numbers, and well accompanied, at the summons of a prince who was always respected, and generally successful in his military undertakings. Even Donald of the Isles proved himself a loyal and submissive vassal; and while he came with a force which showed his great authority, he placed it submissively at the disposal of his sovereign. His men were arrayed in the Highland fashion, with shirts of mail, two-handed swords, axes, and bows and arrows; and Donald offered, when the Scots should enter England, that he would march a mile in front of the King's host, and take upon himself the danger of the first onset. But James's first object was the siege of Roxburgh. This strong Castle was situated on an eminence near the junction of Tweed and Teviot; the waters of the Teviot, raised by a damhead or wear, flowed round the fortress, and its walls were as strong as the engineers of the time could

raise. On former occasions it had been taken by stratagem, but James was now to proceed by a regular siege.

With this purpose he established a battery of such large clumsy cannon as were constructed at that time, upon the north side of the river Tweed. The siege had lasted some time, and the army began to be weary of the undertaking, when they received new spirit from the arrival of the Earl of Huntly with a gallant body of fresh troops. The King, out of joy at these succours, commanded his artillery to fire a volley upon the Castle, and stood near the cannon himself, to mark the effect of the shot. The guns of the period were awkwardly framed out of bars of iron, fastened together by hoops of the same metal, somewhat in the same manner in which barrels are now made. They were, therefore, far more liable to accidents than modern cannon, which are cast in one entire solid piece, and then bored hollow by a machine. One of these ill-made guns burst in going off. A

fragment of iron broke James's thigh-bone, and killed him on the spot. Another splinter wounded the Earl of Angus. No other person sustained injury, though many stood around. Thus died James the Second of Scotland, in the twenty-ninth year of his life, after reigning twenty-four years.

This King did not possess the elegant accomplishments of his father; and the manner in which he slew Douglas must be admitted as a stain upon his reputation. Yet he was upon the whole a good Prince, and was greatly lamented by his subjects. A thorn tree, in the Duke of Roxburghe's park at Fleurs, still shows the spot where he died.

CHAP. IX.

Reign of James III.—Insurrection of the Homes and Hepburns—Murder of the King.

Upon the lamentable death of James II., the army which lay before Roxburgh was greatly discouraged, and seemed about to raise the siege. But Margaret, the widow of their slain Monarch, appeared in their council of war, leading in her eldest son, a child of eight years old, who was the successor to the crown, and spoke to them these gallant words: "Fye, my noble lords, think not now shamefully to give up an enterprise which is so bravely begun, or to abandon the revenge of this unhappy accident which has befallen before this ill-omened castle. Forward, my brave lords, and persevere in your undertaking, and never turn your backs till this siege is victoriously ended. Let it not be said that such brave champions needed to hear from a woman,

and a widowed one, the courageous advice and comfort which she ought rather to receive from you." The Scottish nobles received this heroic address with shouts of applause, and persevered in the siege of Roxburgh Castle, until the garrison, receiving no relief, were obliged to surrender the place through famine. The governor is stated to have been put to death, and in the animosity of the Scots against everything concerned with the death of their King, they levelled the walls of the Castle with the ground, and the Scottish army returned victorious from an enterprise which had cost them so dear.

The minority of James III. was more prosperous than that of his father and grandfather. The affairs of state were guided by the experienced wisdom of Bishop Kennedy. Roxburgh was, as we have said, taken and destroyed. Berwick, during the dissensions of the Civil Wars of England, was surrendered to the Scots, and the dominions of the Islands of Orkney and Zetland, which had hitherto belonged to the

Kings of Norway, were acquired as the marriage portion of a Princess of Denmark and Norway, who was united in marriage to the King of Scotland.

These favourable circumstances were first interrupted by the death of Archbishop Kennedy; after which event, one family, that of the Boyds, started into such a degree of temporary power as seemed to threaten the public tranquillity. The tutor of James III. was Gilbert Kennedy, a wise and grave man, who continued to regulate the studies of the King after the death of his brother the prelate, but unadvisedly called in to his assistance Sir Alexander the brother of Lord Boyd, as one who was younger and fitter than himself to teach James military exercises. By means of this appointment, Sir Alexander, his brother Lord Boyd, and two of his sons, became so intimate with the King, that they resolved to take him from under the management of Kennedy entirely. The Court was then residing at Linlithgow, and the King, while abroad on a hunting party, was persuaded

to direct his horse's head to Edinburgh, instead of returning. Kennedy, the tutor, hastened to oppose the King's desire, and seizing his horse by the bridle, wished to lead him back to Linlithgow. Alexander Boyd rushed forward, and striking with a hunting-staff the old man, who had deserved better usage at his hand, forced him to quit the King's rein, and accomplished his purpose of carrying James to Edinburgh, where he entered upon the administration of affairs, and having granted a solemn pardon to the Boyds for whatever violence had occurred in their proceedings, he employed them for a time. Sir Thomas, one of Lord Boyd's sons, was honoured with the hand of the Princess Margaret, the King's eldest sister, and was created Earl of Arran. He deserved even this elevation by his personal accomplishments, if he approached the character given of him by an English gentleman. He is described as "the most courteous, gentle, wise, kind, companionable, and bounteous Earl of Arran;"—and again,

as "a light, able-bodied, well-spoken man, a goodly archer, and a knight most devout, most perfect, and most true to his lady."

Notwithstanding his accomplishments, the sudden rise of his family was followed by as sudden a fall. The King deprived the Boyds of their offices, and caused them to be tried for the violence committed at Linlithgow, notwithstanding the pardon which he himself had granted. Sir Alexander Boyd was condemned and executed. Lord Boyd and his sons escaped, and died in exile. After the death of Sir Thomas, (the Earl of Arran,) the Princess Margaret was married to the Lord Hamilton, to whom she carried the estate and title of Arran.

It was after the fall of the Boyds that the King came to administer the government in person, and that the defects of his character began to appear. He was timorous, a great failing in a warlike age; and his cowardice made him suspicious of his nobility, and particularly of his two brothers. He was fond of money, and therefore did not use that generosity towards his power-

ful subjects which was necessary to secure their attachment, but, on the contrary, endeavoured to obtain riches by encroaching upon the rights both of clergy and laity, and thus made himself at once hated and contemptible. He was fond of the fine arts, as they are called, a disposition graceful in a monarch, if exhibited with due regard to his dignity. But he made architects and musicians his principal companions, excluding his nobility from the personal familiarity to which he admitted those whom the haughty Barons of Scotland termed masons and fiddlers. Cochran, an architect, Rogers, a musician, Leonard, a smith, Hommel, a tailor, and Torphichen, a fencing-master, were his counsellors and companions. These habits of low society excited the hatred of the nobility, who began to make comparisons betwixt the King and his two brothers, the Dukes of Albany and Mar, greatly to the disadvantage of James.

Both these princes were of appearance and manners such as were then thought

most suited to their royal birth. This is the description of the Duke of Albany by an ancient Scottish author: He was well proportioned, and tall in stature, and comely in his countenance, that is to say, broad-faced, red-nosed, large-eared, and having a very awful countenance when it pleased him to speak with those who had displeased him. Mar was of a less stern temper, and gave great satisfaction to all who approached his person, by the mildness and gentleness of his manners. Both princes were excellent in the military exercises of tilting, hunting, hawking, and other personal accomplishments, for which their brother, the King, was unfit, by taste, or from timidity, although they were in those times reckoned indispensable to a man of rank.

Perhaps some excuse for the King's fears may be found in the turbulent disposition of the Scottish nobles, who, like the Douglasses and Boyds, often nourished schemes of ambition, which they endeavoured to gratify by exercising a control over the King's

person. The following incident may serve to amuse you, among so many melancholy tales, and at the same time to show you the manners of the Scottish Kings, and the fears which James entertained for the enterprises of the nobility.

About the year 1474, Lord Somerville being in attendance upon the King's court, James III. offered to come and visit him at his Castle of Cowthally, near the town of Carnwath, where he then lived in all the rude hospitality of the time, for which he was peculiarly remarkable. It was his custom, when, being from home, he intended to return to the castle with a party of guests, merely to write the words, *Speates and raxes*, that is, spits and ranges, meaning by this hint that there should be a great quantity of food prepared, and that the spits and ranges, or frame-work on which they turn, should be put into employment. Even the visit of the King himself did not induce Lord Somerville to send any other than his usual intimation, only he repeated it three

times, and dispatched it to his castle by a special messenger. The paper was delivered to the Lady Somerville, who, having been lately married, was not quite accustomed to read her husband's handwriting, which probably was not very good, in those times when noblemen used the sword more than the pen. So the lady sent for the steward, and, after laying their heads together, instead of reading *Speates and raxes, speates and raxes, speates and raxes*, they made out the writing to be *Spears and jacks, spears and jacks, spears and jacks.* Jacks were a sort of leathern doublet, covered with plates of iron, worn as armour by horsemen of inferior rank. They concluded the meaning of these terrible words to be, that Lord Somerville was in some distress, or engaged in some quarrel in Edinburgh, and wanted assistance; so that, instead of killing cattle and preparing for a feast, they collected armed men together, and got ready for a fray. A party of two hundred horsemen were speedily assembled, and were trotting

over the moors to Edinburgh, when they observed a large company of gentlemen employed in the sport of hawking, on the side of Corsett-hill. This was the King and Lord Somerville, who were on their road to Cowthally, taking their sport as they went along. The appearance of a numerous body of armed men soon turned their game to earnest; and the King, who saw the Lord Somerville's banner at the head of the troop, concluded it was some rebellious enterprise against his person, and charged the Baron with treason. Lord Somerville declared his innocence. "Yonder," said he, "are indeed my men and my banner, but I have no knowledge whatever of the cause that has brought them here. But if your Grace will permit me to ride forward, I will soon see the cause of this disturbance. In the meantime, let my eldest son and heir remain as a hostage in your Grace's power, and let him lose his head if I prove false to my duty." The King accordingly permitted Lord Somerville to ride towards his followers, when

the matter was soon explained by those who commanded them. The mistake was their only subject of merriment; for the King looking at the letter, protested he himself would have read it spears and jacks, rather than speats and raxes. When they came to Cowthally, the lady was much out of countenance at the mistake. But the King greatly praised her for the dispatch which she had used in raising men to assist her husband, and said he hoped she would always have as brave a band at his service, when the King and Kingdom required them. And thus everything went happily off.

It was natural that a Prince of a timid, and at the same time a severe disposition, such as James III. seems to have had, should see with anxiety the hold which his brothers possessed over the hearts of his subjects; and the insinuations of the unworthy familiars of his private hours turned that anxiety and suspicion into deadly and implacable hatred. Various causes combined to induce the mean and obscure favourites

of James to sow enmity betwixt him and his brothers. The Homes and Hepburns, families which had risen into additional power after the fall of the Douglasses, had several private disputes with Albany concerning privileges and property belonging to the Earldom of March, which had been conferred on him by his father. Albany was also Lord Warden of the east frontiers, and in that capacity had restrained and disobliged those powerful clans. To be revenged, they made interest with Robert Cochran, the King's principal adviser, and gave him, it is said, large bribes to put Albany out of credit with the King. Cochran's own interest suggested the same vile course, for he must have been sensible that Albany and Mar disapproved of the King's intimacy with him and his companions.

These unworthy favourites, therefore, set themselves to fill the King's mind with apprehensions of dangers which were to arise to him from his brothers. They informed him that the Earl of Mar had consulted

witches when and how the King should die, and that it had been answered that he should fall by means of his nearest relations. They brought to James also an astrologer, that is, a man who pretended to calculate future events by the motion of the stars, who told him that in Scotland a Lion should be killed by his own whelps. All these things wrought on the jealous and timid disposition of the King, so that he seized upon both his brethren. Albany was imprisoned in the Castle of Edinburgh, but Mar's fate was instantly decided. The King caused his brother to be put to death by stifling him in a bath, or, as other historians say, by causing him to be bled to death. James III. committed this horrid crime, in order to avoid dangers which were in a great measure imaginary; but we shall find that the death of his brother Mar rather endangered than added to his safety.

Albany was in danger of the same fate, but some of his friends in France or Scotland had formed a plan of rescuing him.

A small sloop came into the road-stead of Leith, loaded with wine of Gascony, and two small barrels were sent up as a present to the imprisoned Prince. The guard having suffered the casks to be carried to Albany's chamber, the Duke, examining them in private, found that one of them contained a roll of wax, enclosing a letter, exhorting him to make his escape, and promising that the little vessel which brought the wine should be ready to receive him if he could gain the water-side. The letter conjured him to be speedy, as there was a purpose to behead him on the day following. A coil of ropes was also enclosed in the same cask, to effect his descent from the castle wall, and the precipice upon which it is built. There was a faithful attendant, his chamberlain, imprisoned with him in the same chamber, who promised to assist his master in this perilous undertaking. The first point was to secure the captain of the guard; for which purpose Albany invited him to sup with him, in order, as the Duke pretended,

to taste the good wine which had been presented to him. The captain of the guard, having placed his watches where he thought there was danger, came to the Duke's chamber, attended by three of his soldiers, and partook of a collation. After supper, the Duke engaged him in playing at tables and dice, and the captain, seated beside a hot fire, and plied with wine by the chamberlain, began to grow drowsy, as did his attendants, on whom the liquor had not been spared. Then the Duke of Albany, a strong man and desperate, leapt from table, and stabbed the captain with a whinger or dagger, so that he died on the spot. The like he did to two of the captain's men, and the chamberlain dispatched the other, and threw their bodies on the fire. This was the more easily accomplished that the soldiers were intoxicated and stupified. They then took the keys from the captain's pocket, and getting out upon the walls, chose a retired corner, out of the watchmen's sight, to make their perilous descent. The cham-

berlain tried to go down the rope first, but it was too short, so that he fell and broke his thigh-bone. He then called to his master to make the rope longer. Albany returned to his apartment, and took the sheets from the bed, with which he lengthened the rope, so that he descended the precipice in safety. He then got his chamberlain on his back, and conveyed him to a place of safety, where he might remain concealed till his hurt was cured, and went himself to the sea-side, when, upon the appointed signal, a boat came ashore and took him off to the vessel, in which he sailed for France.

During the night, the guards, who knew that their officer was in the Duke's apartment with four men, could not but suppose that all was safe; but when daylight showed them the rope hanging from the walls, they became alarmed, and hastened to the Duke's lodgings. Here they found the body of one man lying near the door, and the corpses of the Captain and other two lying upon the fire. The King was much surpri-

sed at so strange an escape, and would give no credit to it till he had examined the place with his own eyes.

The death of Mar, and the flight of Albany, increased the insolence of King James's unworthy favourites. Robert Cochran, the mason, rose into great power, and as every man's petition to the King came through his hands, and he expected and received bribes to give his countenance, he amassed so much wealth, that he was able in his turn to bribe the King to confer on him the Earldom of Mar, with the lands and revenues of the deceased Prince. All men were filled with indignation to see the inheritance of the murdered Duke, the son of the King of Scotland, conferred upon a mean upstart like this Cochran. He was guilty of another piece of mal-administration, by mixing the silver coin of the kingdom with brass and lead, and thereby decreasing its real value, while orders were given by proclamation to take it at the same rate as if it were composed of pure silver. The people refused to sell their

corn and other commodities for this debased coin, which introduced great distress, confusion, and scarcity. Some one told Cochran, that this money should be called in, and good coin issued in its stead; but he was so confident of the currency of the Cochran-placks, as the people called them, that he said,—"The day I am hanged they may be called in; not sooner." This speech, which he made in jest, proved true in reality.

In the year 1582, the disputes with England had come to a great height, and Edward IV. made preparations to invade Scotland, principally in the hope of recovering the town of Berwick. He invited the Duke of Albany from France to join him in this undertaking, promising to place him on the Scottish throne instead of his brother. This was held out in order to take advantage of the unpopularity of King James, and the general disposition which manifested itself in Scotland in favour of Albany.

But, however discontented with their so-

vereign, the Scottish nation showed themselves in no way disposed to receive another king from the hands of the English. The Parliament assembled, and unanimously determined on war against Edward the Robber, as they called Edward IV. To support this violent language, James ordered the whole array of the kingdom, that is, all the men who were bound to discharge military service, to assemble at the Borough-moor of Edinburgh, from whence they marched to Lauder, and encamped between the river Leader and the town to the number of fifty thousand men.

But the great barons, who had there assembled with their followers, were less disposed to advance against the English than to correct the abuses of King James's administration.

Many of the nobility and barons held a secret council in the church of Lauder, where they enlarged upon the evils which Scotland sustained through the insolence

and corruption of Cochran and his associates. While they were thus declaiming, Lord Gray requested their attention to a fable. "The mice," he said, "being much annoyed by the persecution of the cat, resolved that a bell should be hung about puss's neck, to give notice when she was coming. But though the measure was agreed to in full council, it could not be carried into effect, because no mouse had courage enough to undertake to tie the bell to the neck of their formidable enemy." This was as much as to say, that though they might make bold resolutions against the King's ministers, yet it would be difficult to find any one courageous enough to act upon them.

Archibald, Earl of Angus, a man of gigantic strength and intrepid courage, and head of that second family of Douglas whom I before mentioned, started up when Gray had done speaking. "I am he," he said, "who will bell the cat;" from which ex-

pression he was distinguished by the name of Bell-the-Cat to his dying day.

While thus engaged, a loud authoritative knocking was heard at the door. This announced the arrival of Cochran, attended by a guard of three hundred men, attached to his own person, dressed in his livery of white, with black facings, and armed with partizans. His own personal appearance corresponded with this magnificent attendance. He was attired in a riding suit of black velvet, and had round his neck a fine chain of gold, whilst a bugle-horn, tipped and mounted with gold, hung down by his side. His helmet was borne before him, richly inlaid with the same metal; even his tent and tent-cords were of silk, instead of ordinary materials. In this gallant guise, having learned there was some council holding among the nobility, he came to see what they were doing, and it was with this purpose that he knocked furiously at the door of the church. Sir Robert Douglas of Lochleven, who had the charge of watching the door,

demanded who was there. When Cochran answered, "The Earl of Mar," the nobles greatly rejoiced at hearing he was come, to deliver himself, as it were, into their hands.

As Cochran entered the church, Angus, to make good his promise to bell the cat, met him, and rudely pulled the gold chain from his neck, saying, "A halter would better become him." Sir Robert Douglas, at the same time, snatched away his bugle-horn, saying, "Thou hast been an hunter of mischief too long."

"Is this jest or earnest, my lords?" said Cochran, more astonished than alarmed at this rude reception.

"It is sad earnest," said they, "and that thou and thy accomplices shall feel; for you have abused the King's favour towards you, and now you shall have your reward according to your deserts."

It does not appear that Cochran or his guards offered any resistance. A part of the nobility went to the King's pavilion, and,

while some engaged him in conversation, others seized upon Leonard, Hommel, Torphichen, and the rest, with Preston, one of the only two gentlemen amongst King James's minions, and hastily condemned them to instant death, as having misled the King, and misgoverned the kingdom. The only person who escaped was John Ramsay of Balmain, a youth of honourable birth, who clasped the King round the waist when he saw the others seized upon. Him the nobles spared in respect of his youth, for he was not above sixteen years, and of the King's earnest intercession in his behalf. There was a loud acclamation among the troops, who contended with each other in offering their tent-ropes, and the halters of their horses, to be the means of executing these obnoxious ministers. Cochran, who was a man of audacity, and had first attracted the King's attention by his behaviour in a duel, did not lose his courage, though he displayed it in an absurd man-

ner. He had the vanity to request that his hands might not be tied with a hempen-rope, but with a silk-cord, which he offered to furnish from those of his pavilion; but this was only teaching his enemies how to give his feelings additional pain. They told him he was but a false thief, and should die with all manner of shame; and they were at pains to procure a hair-tether, or halter, as still more ignominious than one of hemp. With this they hanged Cochran over the centre of the bridge of Lauder, (now demolished,) in the middle of his companions, who were suspended on each side of him. When the execution was finished, the lords returned to Edinburgh, where they resolved that the King should remain in the Castle under a gentle and respectful degree of restraint.

In the meantime, the English obtained possession of Berwick, which important place was never again recovered by the Scots, though they continued to assert their

claim to that bulwark of the Eastern Marches. The English seemed disposed to prosecute their advantages; but the Scottish army, having moved to Haddington to fight them, a peace was concluded, partly by the mediation of the Duke of Albany, who had seen the vanity of any hopes which the English had given him, and, laying aside his views upon the crown, seemed desirous to become the means of restoring peace to the country.

The Duke of Albany, and the celebrated Richard Duke of Gloucester, (afterwards Richard the Third,) are said to have negotiated the terms of peace, as well between the King and his nobility, as between France and England. They had a personal meeting at Edinburgh with the Council of Scottish Lords who had managed the affairs of the kingdom since the King's imprisonment. The Council would pay no respect to the Duke of Gloucester, who, as an Englishman, they justly thought had no right to interfere in the affairs of Scotland; but to

the Duke of Albany they showed much reverence, requesting to know what he required at their hands.

"First of all," he said, "I desire that the King, my brother, be set at liberty."

"My Lord," said Archibald Bell-the-Cat, who was their Chancellor, "that shall be presently done, and the rather that you desire it. As to the person who is with you, (meaning the Duke of Gloucester,) we know him not; neither will we grant anything at his asking. But we know you to be the King's brother, and nearest heir to his Grace after his infant son. Therefore, we put the King's person at your disposal, trusting that he will act by your advice in future, and govern the kingdom, so as not to excite the discontent of the people, or render it necessary for us, who are the nobles of Scotland, to act contrary to his pleasure."

James being thus set at liberty, became, to appearance, so perfectly reconciled with his brother, the Duke of Albany, that the

two royal brothers used the same chamber, the same table, and the same bed. While the King attended to the buildings and amusements in which he took pleasure, Albany administered the affairs of the kingdom, and, for some time, with applause. But the ambition of his temper began again to show itself; the nation became suspicious of his intimate connexion with the English, and just apprehensions were entertained that the Duke aimed still at obtaining the crown by assistance of Richard III., now King of England. The Duke was, therefore, once more obliged to fly into England, where he remained for some time, assisting the English against his countrymen. He was present at that skirmish in 1483, where the old Earl of Douglas was made prisoner, and only escaped by the speed of his horse. Albany soon after retired into France, where he formed a marriage with a daughter of the Earl of Boulogne, by whom he had a son, John, afterwards Regent of Scotland in the days of James V. Al-

bany himself was wounded severely by the splinter of a lance at one of the tournaments, or tilting-matches, which I have described to you, and died in consequence. The fickleness with which he changed from one side to another, disappointed the high ideas which had been formed of his character in youth.

Freed from his brother's superintendence, the King gradually sunk back into those practices which had formerly cost him so dear. To prevent a renewal of the force put on his person, he made a rule that none should appear armed in the royal presence, except the King's Guard, who were placed under the command of that same John Ramsay of Balmain, the only one of his former favourites who had been spared by Bell-the-Cat, and the other nobles, at the insurrection of Lauder Bridge. This gave high offence in a country, where to be without arms was accounted both unsafe and dishonourable.

The King's love of money also grew, as

is often the case, more excessive as he advanced in years. He would hardly grant anything, whether as matter of favour or of right, without receiving some gift or gratuity. By this means he accumulated a quantity of treasure, which, considering the poverty of his kingdom, is absolutely marvellous. His "black chest," as his strong box was popularly called, was brimful of gold and silver coins, besides quantities of plate and jewels. But while he hoarded these treasures, he was augmenting the discontent of both the nobility and people; and amid the general sense of the King's weakness, and hatred of his avarice, a general rebellion was at length excited against him.

The King, among other magnificent establishments, had built a great hall, and a royal chapel, within the Castle of Stirling, both of them specimens of finely ornamented Gothic architecture. He had also established a double choir of musicians and singing men in the chapel, designing that

one complete band should attend him wherever he went, to perform Divine service before his person, while the other, as complete in every respect, should remain in daily attendance in the royal chapel.

As this establishment necessarily incurred considerable expense, James proposed to annex to it the revenues of the Priory of Coldinghame, in Berwickshire. This rich Priory had its lands amongst the possessions of the Homes and the Hepburns, who had established it as a kind of right that the Prior should be of one or other of these two families, in order to insure their being favourably treated in such bargains as either of them might have to make with the Church. When, therefore, these powerful clans understood that, instead of a Home or Hepburn being named Prior, the King intended to bestow the revenues of Coldinghame to maintain his Royal Chapel at Stirling, they became extremely indignant, and began to hold a secret correspondence, and form alliances, with all the discon-

tented men in Scotland, and especially with Angus, and such other lords as had been engaged in the affair of Lauder Bridge, who naturally entertained apprehensions that the King would, one day or other, find a means of avenging himself for the slaughter of his favourites, and the restraint which had been imposed on his own person.

By the time that the King heard of this league against him, it had reached so great a head that everything seemed to be prepared for war, since the whole lords of the south of Scotland, who could collect their forces with a rapidity unknown elsewhere, were all in the field, and ready to act. The King, naturally timid, was induced to fly to the North. He fortified the Castle of Stirling, commanded by Shaw of Fintrie, to whom he committed the custody of the Prince his son, and heir-apparent, charging the governor neither to let any one enter the Castle, nor permit any one to leave it, as he loved his honour and his life. Especially he commanded him to let no one have access to his

son. His treasures he deposited in Edinburgh Castle; and having thus placed in safety, as he thought, the two things he loved best in the world, he hastened to the north country, where he was joined by the great lords and gentlemen to the north of the Forth; so that it seemed as if the south and the north of Scotland were about to fight against each other.

The King, in passing through Fife, visited the last Earl of Douglas, who had been compelled, as I have before told you, to become a monk in the Abbey of Lindores. He offered him full reconciliation and forgiveness, if he would once more come out into the world, place himself at the head of his vassals, and by the terror of his former authority, withdraw from the banners of the rebel peers such of the southland-men, as might still remember the fame of Douglas. But the views of the old Earl were turned towards another world, and he replied to the King—"Ah, sir, your Grace has kept me and your black casket so long under lock and key, that the time

in which we might have done you good service is passed and gone." In saying this, he alluded to the King's hoard of treasure, which, if he had spent it in time, might have attached many to his person, as he, Douglas, when younger, could have raised men in his behalf; but now the period of getting aid from either source was passed away.

Meanwhile, Angus, Home, Bothwell, and others of the insurgent nobility, determined, if possible, to get into their hands the person of the Prince, resolving that, notwithstanding his being a child, they would avail themselves of his authority to oppose that of his father. Accordingly, they bribed, with a large sum of money, Shaw, the governor of Stirling Castle, to deliver the Prince (afterwards James IV.) into their keeping. When they had possessed themselves of Prince James's person, they collected their army, and published proclamations in his name, intimating that King James III. was bringing Englishmen into the country to assist in overturning its liberties,—that he had sold the frontiers of Scotland to the Earl of

Northumberland, and to the governor of Berwick, and declaring that they were united to dethrone a King whose intentions were so unkingly, and to place his son in his stead. These allegations were false; but the King was so unpopular, that they were listened to and believed.

James, in the meantime, arrived before Stirling at the head of a considerable army, and passing to the gate of the Castle, demanded entrance. But the governor refused to admit him. The King then eagerly demanded his son, to which the treacherous governor replied, that the lords had taken the Prince from him against his will. Then the poor King saw that he was betrayed, and said in wrath, "False villain, thou hast betrayed me; but if I live, thou shalt be rewarded according to thy deserts!" If the King had not been thus treacherously deprived of Stirling Castle, he might, by means of that fortress, have avoided a battle until more forces had come up to his assistance; and, in that case, might have

overpowered the rebel lords, as his father did the Douglasses before Abercorn. Yet having with him an army of nearly thirty thousand men, he moved boldly towards the insurgents. The Lord David Lindsay of the Byres, in particular, encouraged the King to advance. He had joined him with a thousand horse and three thousand foot-men from the counties of Fife and Kinross; and now riding up to the King on a fiery grey horse, he lighted down, and entreated the King's acceptance of that noble animal, which, whether he had occasion to advance or retreat, would beat every other horse in Scotland, provided the King could keep his saddle.

The King upon this took courage, and advanced against the rebels, confident in his great superiority of numbers. The field of battle was not above a mile or two distant from that where Bruce had defeated the English on the glorious day of Bannock-burn, but the fate of his descendant and successor was widely different.

The King's army was divided into three great bodies. Ten thousand Highlanders, under Huntly and Athole, led the van—ten thousand more, from the westland counties, were led by the Lords of Erskine, Graham, and Menteith. The King was to command the rear, in which the burghers sent by the different towns were stationed. The Earl of Crawford and Lord David Lindsay, with the men of Fife and Angus, had the right wing; Lord Ruthven commanded the left, with the people of Strathearn and Stormont.

The King, thus moving forward in order of battle, called for the horse which Lord David Lindsay had given him, that he might ride forward and observe the motions of the enemy. He saw them from an eminence advancing in three divisions, having about six thousand men in each. The Homes and Hepburns had the first division, with the men of the East Borders and of East Lothian. The next was composed of the Western Borderers, or men of Liddesdale and Annan-

dale, with many from Galloway. The third division consisted of the rebel lords and their choicest followers, bringing with them the young Prince James, and displaying the broad banner of Scotland.

When the King beheld his own ensign unfurled against him, and knew that his son was in the hostile ranks, his heart, never very courageous, began altogether to fail him; for he remembered the prophecy, that he was to fall by his nearest of kin, and also what the astrologer had told him of the Scottish lion which was to be strangled by his own whelps. These idle fears so preyed on James's mind, that they became visible to those around him, who conjured him to retire. But at that moment the battle began.

The Homes and Hepburns attacked the King's vanguard, but were repulsed by the Highlanders with volleys of arrows. On this the Borderers of Liddesdale and Annandale, who bore spears longer than those used in the other parts of Scotland, charged

with the wild and furious cries, which they called their *slogan*, and bore down the royal forces opposed to them.

Surrounded by sights and sounds to which he was so little accustomed, James lost his remaining presence of mind, and turning his back, fled towards Stirling. But he was unable to manage the grey horse given him by Lord Lindsay, which, taking the bit in his teeth, ran full gallop down-hill into a little hamlet, where was a mill, called Beaton's Mill. A woman had come out to draw water at the mill-dam, but, terrified at seeing a man in complete armour coming down towards her at full speed, she left her pitcher, and fled back into the mill. The sight of the pitcher frightened the King's horse, so that he swerved as he was about to leap the brook, and James, losing his seat, fell to the ground, where, being heavily armed and sorely bruised, he remained motionless. The people came out, took him into the mill, and laid him on a bed. When he came to himself,

he demanded the assistance of a priest. The miller's wife asked who he was, and he imprudently replied, "I was your King this morning." With equal imprudence the poor woman ran to the door, and called with loud exclamations for a priest to confess the King. "I am a priest," said an unknown person, who had just come up; "lead me to the King." When he saw the King, he kneeled with apparent humility, and asked him, "Whether he was mortally wounded?" James replied, that his hurts were not mortal, if they were carefully looked to; but, in the meantime, he desired to be confessed, and receive pardon of his sins from a priest, according to the fashion of the Catholic Church. "This shall presently give thee pardon!" answered the assassin; and, drawing a poniard, he stabbed the King four or five times to the very heart; then took the body on his back and departed, no man opposing him, and no man knowing what he did with the body.

Who this murderer was has never been

discovered, nor whether he was really a priest or not. There were three persons, Lord Gray, Stirling of Keir, and one Borthwick a priest, observed to pursue the King closely, and it was supposed that one or other of them did the bloody deed. It is remarkable that Gray was the son of that Sir Patrick, commonly called Cowe Gray, who assisted James II. to dispatch Douglas in Stirling Castle. It would be a singular coincidence if the son of this active agent in Douglas's death should have been the actor in that of King James's son.

The battle did not last long after the King left the field, the royal party drawing off towards Stirling, and the victors returning to their camp. It was fought upon the 18th June, 1488.

Thus died King James the Third, an unwise and unwarlike Prince; although, setting aside the murder of his brother the Earl of Mar, his character is rather that of a weak and avaricious man, than of a cruel and criminal sovereign. His taste for the fine

arts would have been becoming in a private person, though it was carried to a pitch which interfered with his duties as a sovereign. He fell, like most of his family, in the flower of his age, being only thirty-six years old.

CHAP. X.

Reign of James IV.—Naval Exploits of Sir Andrew Wood—Trial of Lord Lindsay of the Byres—Invasion of England in behalf of Perkin Warbeck—Treaty with England, and Marriage of James with Margaret, Daughter of Henry VII.

THE fate of James III. was not known for some time. He had been a patron of naval affairs; and on the great revolt in which he perished, a brave sea officer, Sir Andrew Wood of Largo, had taken the King's side, and was lying in the Frith of Forth, not far distant from the coast where the battle was fought. He had sent ashore his boats, and brought off several wounded men of the King's party, amongst whom it was supposed might be the King himself.

Anxious to ascertain this important point, the Lords sent to Sir Andrew Wood to

come on shore, and appear before their council. Wood agreed, on condition that two noblemen of distinction, Lords Seton and Fleming, should go on board his ships, and remain there as hostages for his safe return.

The brave seaman presented himself before the Council and the young King in the town of Leith. As soon as the Prince saw Sir Andrew, who was a goodly person, and richly dressed, he went towards him, and said, "Sir, are you my father?"

"I am not your father," answered Wood, the tears falling from his eyes; "but I was your father's servant while he lived, and shall be so to lawful authority until the day I die."

The Lords then asked what men they were who had come out of his ships, and again returned to them on the day of the battle of Sauchie.

"It was I and my brother," said Sir Andrew undauntedly, "who were desirous

to have bestowed our lives in the King's defence."

They then directly demanded of him, whether the King was on board his ships? To which Sir Andrew replied with the same firmness, "He is not on board my vessels. I wish he had been there, as I should have taken care to have kept him safe from the traitors who have murdered him, and whom I trust to see hanged and drawn for their demerits."

These were bitter answers; but the Lords were obliged to endure them, without attempting any revenge, for fear the seamen had retaliated upon Fleming and Seton. But when Sir Andrew had returned on board his ship, they sent for the best seamen in the town of Leith, and offered them a reward if they would attack Sir Andrew Wood and his two ships, and make him prisoner, to answer for his insolent conduct to the council. But Captain Barton, one of the best mariners in Leith, replied to the proposal by informing the council, that

though Sir Andrew had but two vessels, yet they were so well furnished with artillery, and Sir Andrew himself was so brave and skilful, that no two ships in Scotland would be a match for him.

James IV. afterwards received Sir Andrew Wood into high favour; and he deserved it by his exploits. In 1490, a squadron of five English vessels came into the Forth, and plundered some Scottish merchant-ships. Sir Andrew sailed against them with his two ships, the Flower, and the Yellow Carvel, took the five English vessels, and, making their crews and commanders prisoners, presented them to the King at Leith. Henry VII. of England was so much incensed at this defeat, that he sent a stout sea-captain, called Stephen Bull, with three strong ships, equipped on purpose, to take Sir Andrew Wood. They met him near the mouth of the Frith, and fought with the utmost courage on both sides, attending so much to the battle, and so little to anything else, that they let their ships

drift with the tide, so that the action, which began off Saint Abb's Head, ended in the Frith of Tay. At length Stephen Bull and his three ships were taken. Sir Andrew again presented the prisoners to the King, who sent them back to England, with a message to Henry VII., that the Scots could fight by sea as well as land.

To return to the Lords who had gained the victory at Sauchie. They took a resolution, which appears an act of daring effrontery. They resolved to try some of the principal persons who had assisted King James III. in the late civil commotion, as if in so doing they had committed treason against James IV., although the last was not, and could not be king, till after his father's death. They determined to begin with Lord David Lindsay of the Byres, a man well acquainted with military matters, but otherwise blunt and ignorant; so they thought it would be no difficult matter to get him to submit himself to the King's pleasure, when they proposed to take a fine

in money from him, or perhaps confiscate some part of his lands. This they thought would encourage others to submit in like manner; and thus the conspirators proposed to enrich themselves, and to impoverish those who had been their enemies.

It was on the 10th May 1489, that Lord David Lindsay was called upon before the Parliament, then sitting at Edinburgh, to defend himself against a charge of treason, which stated, "that he had come in arms to Sauchie with the King's father against the King himself, and had given the King's father a sword and good horse, counselling him to devour the King's grace here present."

Lord Lindsay knew nothing about the forms of law-affairs, but hearing himself repeatedly called upon to answer to this accusation, he started up, and told the nobles of the Parliament they were all villains and traitors themselves, and that he would prove them to be such with his sword. The late King, he said, had been cruelly murdered by vil-

lains, who had brought the Prince with them to be a pretext and colour for their enterprise. "And," said the stout old lord, addressing himself personally to the King, who was present in Parliament, "if your Grace's father were still living, I would fight for him to the death, and stand in no awe of these false lurdans—(that is, villains). Or, if your Grace had a son who should come in arms against you, I would take your part against his abettors, and fight in your cause against them, three men against six. Trust me, that though they cause your Grace to believe ill of me, I will prove in the end more faithful than any of them."

The Lord Chancellor, who felt the force of these words, tried to turn off their effect, by saying to the King, that Lord Lindsay was an old-fashioned man, ignorant of legal forms, and not able to speak reverently in his Grace's presence. "But," said he, "he will submit himself to your Grace's

pleasure, and you must not be severe with him;" and, turning to the Lord David, he said, "It is best for you to submit to the King's will, and his Grace will be good to you."

Now you must know, that the Lord David had a brother named Patrick Lindsay, who was as good a lawyer as Lord Lindsay was a soldier. The two brothers had been long upon bad terms; but when this Mr Patrick saw the Chancellor's drift, he trod upon his elder brother's foot, to make him understand that he ought not to follow the advice given him, nor come into the King's will, which would be in fact confessing himself guilty. The Lord David, however, did not understand the hint. On the contrary, as he chanced to have a sore toe, the tread of his brother's foot was painful to him, so that he looked fiercely at him and said, "Thou art too pert to stamp upon my foot—if it were out of the King's presence, I would strike thee upon the face."

But Mr Patrick, without regarding his

brother's causeless anger, fell on his knees before the assembled nobles, and besought that he might have leave to plead for his brother; "for," said he, "I see no man of law will undertake his cause for fear of displeasing the King's Grace; and though, my Lord, my brother and I have not been friends for many years, yet my heart will not suffer me to see the native house from which I am descended perish for want of assistance."

The King having granted Mr Patrick Lindsay liberty of speech in his brother's behalf, he began by objecting to the King's sitting in judgment in a case, in which he was himself a party, and had been an actor. "Wherefore," said Mr Patrick, "we object to his presence to try this cause, in which, being a party, he ought not to be a judge. Therefore we require him, in God's name, to rise and leave the Court, till the question be considered and decided." The Lord Chancellor and the Lords having conversed together, found that this request was reason-

able. So the young King was obliged to retire into an inner apartment, which he resented as a species of public affront.

Mr Patrick next endeavoured to procure favour, by entreating the Lords, who were about to hear the cause, to judge it with impartiality, and as they would wish to be dealt with themselves, were they in misfortune, and some party adverse to them possessed of power.

"Proceed and answer to the accusation," said the Chancellor. "You shall have justice at our hands."

Then Mr Patrick brought forward a defence in point of legal form, stating, that the summons required that the Lord Lindsay should appear forty days after citation, whereas the forty days were now expired; so that they could not be legally compelled to answer to the accusation until summoned anew.

This also was found good law; and Lord David Lindsay, and the other persons accu-

sed, were dismissed for the time, nor were any proceedings ever resumed against them.

Lord David, who had listened to the defences without understanding their meaning, was so delighted with the unexpected consequences of his brother's eloquence, that he broke out into the following rapturous acknowledgment of gratitude :—"Verily, brother, you have fine pyett words, (that is, magpie words.) I could not have believed, by Saint Mary, that ye had such words. For this day's labour ye shall have the Mains of Kirk for your day's wage."

The King, on his side, threatened Mr Patrick with a reward of a different kind, saying, "he would set him where he should not see his feet for twelvemonths." Accordingly, he was as good as his word, sending Mr Patrick to be prisoner in the dungeon of the Castle of Rothsay, in the island of Bute, where he lay for one year.

It is curious to find that the King's authority was so limited in one respect, and

so arbitrary in another. For it appears, that he was obliged to comply with Patrick Lindsay's remonstrance, and leave the seat of regal justice, when his jurisdiction was declined as that of a partial judge; whilst, on the other hand, he had the right, or at least the power, to subject the objecting party to a long and rigorous imprisonment, for discharging his duty towards his client.

James IV. was not long upon the throne ere his own reflections, and the remonstrances of some of the clergy, made him sensible, that his appearance with the rebel Lords against his father in the field of Sauchie was a very sinful action. He did not consider his own youth, nor the enticements of the Lords, who had obtained possession of his person, as any sufficient excuse for having been, in some degree, accessary to his father's death, by appearing in arms against him. He deeply repented the crime, and, according to the doctrines of the Roman Catholic religion, endeavoured to atone for it by various acts of penance. Amongst other

tokens of repentance, he caused to be made an iron belt, or girdle, which he wore constantly under his clothes; and every year of his life he added another link of an ounce or two to the weight of it, as if he desired that his penance should not be relaxed, but rather should increase during all the days of his life.

It was perhaps in consequence of these feelings of repentance, that the King not only forgave that part of the nobility which had appeared on his father's side, and abstained from all further persecution against Lord Lindsay and others, but did all in his power to conciliate their affections, without losing those of the other party. The wealth of his father enabled him to be liberal to the nobles on both sides, and at the same time to maintain a more splendid appearance in his court and royal state than had been practised by any of his predecessors. He was himself expert in all feats of exercise and arms, and encouraged the use of them, and the practice of tilts and tournaments in his

presence, in which he often took a share himself. His authority, as it was greater than that of any king who had reigned since the time of James I., was employed for the administration of justice, and the protection of every rank of his subjects, so that he was reverenced as well as beloved by all classes of his people. Scotland obtained, under his administration, a greater share of prosperity than she had yet enjoyed. She possessed some share of foreign trade, and the success of Sir Andrew Wood, together with the king's exertions in building vessels, made the country be respected, as having a considerable naval power.

These advantages were greatly increased by the unusually long continuance of the peace, or rather the truce, with England. Henry VII. had succeeded to the crown of England, after a dreadful series of civil strife, and being himself a wise and sagacious monarch, he was desirous to repair, by a long interval of repose and quiet, the great damage which the country had sustained by

the wars of York and Lancaster. He was the more disposed to peace with Scotland, that his own title to the throne of England was keenly disputed, and exposed him more than once to the risk of invasion and insurrection.

On the most memorable of these occasions, Scotland was for a short time engaged in the quarrel. A certain personage, calling himself the second son of Edward IV., supposed to have been murdered in the Tower of London, laid claim to the crown which Henry VII. wore. On the part of Henry, this pretended Prince was said to be a low-born Fleming, named Perkin Warbeck, trained up by the Duchess of Burgundy to play the part which he now assumed. It is not, perhaps, even yet certain whether he was the real person he called himself, or an impostor. In 1496, he came to Scotland at the head of a gallant train of foreigners, and accompanied by about fifteen hundred men, and made the greatest offers to James IV. providing he would assist him in his claims

against England. James does not appear to have doubted the adventurer's pretensions to the character which he assumed; he received him with favour and distinction, conferred on him the hand of Lady Catherine Gordon, daughter of the Earl of Huntly, the most beautiful woman in Scotland, and disposed himself to lend him assistance to ascend the English throne.

The Scottish King with this view entered Northumberland, and invited the people of that warlike county to join the ranks of the supposed Prince. But the Northumbrians paid no attention to this invitation, and when the adventurer besought James to spare the country, the Scottish monarch answered with a sneer, that it was very kind of him to interfere in behalf of a people that did not seem at all disposed to acknowledge him. The English in 1497 revenged this inroad by an invasion of Berwickshire, in which they took a small castle, called Ayton. No other mischief was done on either side, for James gave up the cause of

Perkin Warbeck, satisfied either that he had no right to the throne, or that he had not a hold on the affections of any considerable party sufficient to make such a right good. The adventurer, abandoned by James, made afterwards an attempt to invade England from Cornwall, and, being made prisoner, was executed at Tyburn. His wife, who had faithfully attended him through all his misfortunes, fell into the hands of Henry VII., who assigned her a pension, and recommended her to the protection of his Queen. She was commonly called, from her grace and beauty, the White Rose of Scotland.

After this short war had been made up by a truce of seven years, Henry's wisdom was employed in converting that truce into a stable and lasting peace, which might, for a length of time at least, unite two nations, whose mutual interest it was to remain friends, although unhappy circumstances had so long made them enemies. The grounds of the inveterate hostility between England and Scotland had been that unhappy claim

of supremacy set up by Edward I., and persevered in by all his successors. This was a right which England would not abandon, and to which the Scots, by so many instances of determined resistance, had shown they would never submit. For more than a hundred years there had been no regular treaty of peace betwixt England and Scotland, except for the few years which succeeded the treaty of Northampton. During this long period, the kindred nations had been either engaged in the most inveterate wars, or reposing themselves under the protection of short and doubtful truces.

The wisdom of Henry VII. endeavoured to find a remedy for such great evils, by trying what the effects of gentle and friendly influence would avail, where the extremity of force had been employed without effect. The King of England agreed to give his daughter Margaret, a beautiful and accomplished princess, to James IV. in marriage. He offered to endow her with an ample fortune, and on that alliance was to be found-

ed a close league of friendship between England and Scotland, the Kings obliging themselves to assist each other against all the rest of the world. Unfortunately for both countries, but particularly so for Scotland, this peace, designed to be perpetual, did not last above ten years. Yet the good policy of Henry VII. bore fruit after a hundred years had past away; and in consequence of the marriage of James IV. and the Princess Margaret, an end was put to all future national wars, by their great-grandson, James VI. of Scotland and I. of England, becoming King of the whole island of Great Britain.

The claim of supremacy, asserted by England, is not mentioned in this treaty, which was signed 4th January 1502; but as the monarchs treated with each other on equal terms, that claim, which had cost such oceans of Scottish and English blood, must be considered as having been virtually abandoned.

This important marriage was celebrated

with great pomp. The Earl of Surrey, a gallant English nobleman, had the charge to conduct the Princess Margaret to her new kingdom of Scotland. The King came to meet her at Newbattle Abbey, within six miles of Edinburgh. He was gallantly dressed in a jacket of crimson velvet, bordered with cloth of gold, and had hanging at his back his lure, as it is called, an implement which is used in hawking. He was distinguished by his strength and agility, leaping on his horse without putting his toe in the stirrup, and always riding full-gallop, follow who could. When he was about to enter Edinburgh with his new bride, he wished her to ride behind him, and made a gentleman mount to see whether his horse would carry double. But as his spirited charger was not broken for that purpose, the King got up before his bride on her palfrey, which was quieter, and so they rode through the town of Edinburgh in procession, in the same manner you may now see a good farmer and his wife riding to church.

There were shows prepared to receive them, all in the romantic taste of the age. Thus they found in their way a tent pitched, out of which came a knight armed at all points, with a lady bearing his bugle-horn. Suddenly another knight came up, and took away the lady. Then the first knight followed him, and challenged him to fight. They drew swords accordingly, and fought before the King and Queen for their amusement, till the one struck the sword out of the other's hands, and then the King commanded the battle to cease. In this representation all was sport except the blows, and these were serious enough. Many other military spectacles were exhibited, tilts and tournaments in particular. James, calling himself The Savage Knight, appeared in a wild dress, accompanied by the fierce chiefs from the Borders and Highlands, who fought with each other till several were wounded and slain in these ferocious entertainments. It is said the King was not very sorry to see himself thus rid of these tur-

bulent leaders, whose feuds and depredations contributed so often to the public disturbance.

The sports on occasion of the Queen's marriage, and indeed the whole festivities of King James's reign, and the style of living at his court, showed that the Scots, in his time, were a wealthier and a more elegant people than they had formerly been. James IV. was renowned among foreign nations for the splendour of his court, and for the honourable reception which he gave to strangers who visited his kingdom. And we shall see in the next chapter, that his leisure was not entirely bestowed on sport and pastime, but that he also made wise laws for the benefit of the kingdom.

CHAP. XI.

Improvement on Scottish Laws.—Disputes between England and Scotland—Invasion of England—Battle of Flodden, and Death of James IV.

DURING the season of tranquillity which followed the marriage of James and Margaret, we find that the King, with his Parliament, enacted many good laws for the improvement of the country. The Highlands and Islands were particularly attended to, because, as one of the acts of Parliament expressed it, they had become almost savage for want of justices and sheriffs. Magistrates were therefore appointed, and laws made for the government of these wild and unruly people.

Another most important act of Parliament permitted the King, and his nobles and barons, to let their land, not only for military

service, but for a payment in money or in grain; a regulation which tended to introduce quiet peaceful farmers into lands occupied, but left uncultivated, by tenants of a military character. Regulations also took place for attendance on Parliament, and the representation of the different orders of society in that assembly. The possessors of lands were likewise called on to plant wood, and make enclosures, fish-ponds, and other improvements.

All these regulations show, that the King entertained a sincere wish to benefit his subjects, and entertained liberal views of the mode of accomplishing that object. But the unfortunate country of Scotland was destined never to remain any long time in a state of peace or improvement, and accordingly, towards the end of James's reign, events occurred which brought on a defeat still more calamitous than any which the kingdom had yet received.

While Henry VII., the father-in-law of James, continued to live, his wisdom made

him very attentive to preserve the peace which had been established betwixt the two countries, and to remove all the petty causes of quarrel which arose from time to time. But when this wise and cautious monarch died, he was succeeded by his son, Henry VIII., a prince of a bold, haughty, and furious disposition, impatient of control or contradiction, and rather desirous of war than willing to make any concessions for the sake of peace. James IV. and he resembled each other, perhaps, too nearly in temper, to admit of their continuing intimate friends.

The military disposition of Henry chiefly directed him to an enterprise against France, and the King of France, on his part, desired much to renew the old alliance with Scotland, in order that the apprehension of an invasion from the Scottish frontiers, might induce Henry to abandon his scheme of attacking France. He knew, that the splendour in which King James lived had exhausted the treasures which his father had

left behind him, and he concluded that the readiest way to make him a friend, was to supply him with sums of money, which he could not otherwise have raised. Gold was also freely distributed amongst the councillors and favourites of the Scottish King. This liberality showed to great advantage, when compared with the very opposite conduct of the King of England, who delayed even to pay a legacy, which had been left by Henry his father to his sister the Queen of Scotland.

Other circumstances of a different kind tended to create disagreements between England and Scotland. James had been extremely desirous to increase the strength of his kingdom by sea, and its commerce; and Scotland presenting a great extent of sea-coast, and numerous harbours, had at this time a considerable trade. The royal navy, besides one vessel called the Great Michael, supposed to be the largest in the world, consisted, it is said, of sixteen ships of war. He, therefore, paid particular attention to naval affairs.

It chanced that one John Barton, a Scottish mariner, had been captured by the Portuguese, as far back as the year 1476. As the King of Portugal refused to make any amends, James granted the family of Barton letters of reprisals, that is, a warrant empowering them to take all Portuguese vessels which should come in their way, until their loss was made up. There were three brothers, all daring men, but especially the eldest, whose name was Andrew Barton. He had two strong ships, the larger called the Lion, the other the Jenny Pirwen, with which it would appear he cruised in the British Channel, stopping not only Portuguese vessels, but also English ships bound for Portugal. Complaints being made to King Henry, he fitted out two vessels, which were filled with chosen men, and placed under the command of Lord Thomas Howard and Sir Edward Howard, both sons to the Earl of Surrey. They found Barton and his vessels cruising in the Downs, being guided to the place by the captain of a merchant vessel, whom Barton had plundered on the prece-

ding day. On approaching the enemy, the noble brothers showed no ensign of war, but put up a willow wand on their mast, as being the emblem of a trading vessel. But when the Scotsman attempted to make them bring to, the English threw out their flags and pennons, and fired a broadside of their ordnance. Barton then knew that he was engaged with the King of England's ships of war. Far from being dismayed at this, he engaged boldly, and, distinguished by his rich dress and bright armour, appeared on his deck with a whistle of gold about his neck, suspended by a chain of the same precious metal, and encouraged his men to fight valiantly. The fight was very obstinate. If we may believe a ballad of the time, Barton's ship was furnished with a peculiar contrivance, suspending large weights, or beams, from his yard-arms, to be dropped down upon the enemy when they should come alongside. To make use of this contrivance, it was necessary that a person should ascend the main mast, or, in naval

language, go aloft. As the English apprehended much mischief from the consequences of this manœuvre, Howard had stationed a Yorkshire gentleman, named Hustler, the best archer in the ship, with strict injunctions to shoot every one who should attempt to go aloft to let fall the beams of Barton's vessel. Two men were successively killed in the attempt, and Andrew Barton himself, confiding in the strong armour which he wore, began to ascend the mast. Lord Thomas Howard called out to the archer to shoot true, on peril of his life. "Were I to die for it," said Hustler, "I have but two arrows left." The first which he shot bounded from Barton's armour without hurting him. As the Scottish mariner raised his arm to climb higher, the archer took aim where the armour afforded him no protection, and wounded him mortally through the right arm-pit. Barton descended from the mast. "Fight on," he said, "my brave hearts, I am a little wounded, but not slain; I will but rest a while, and then rise and fight again; meantime, stand fast by Saint An-

drew's Cross," meaning the Scottish flag, or ensign. He encouraged his men with his whistle, while the breath of life remained. At length, the whistle was heard no longer, and the Howards, boarding the Scottish vessel, found that her daring captain was dead. They carried the Lion into the Thames, and it is remarkable that Barton's ship became the second man-of-war in the English navy. When the Kings wanted to equip a fleet, they hired or pressed into their service merchant vessels, and put soldiers on board of them. The ship called the Great Henry was the first built by the King as his own property,—this captured vessel was the second.

James IV. was highly incensed at this insult, as he termed it, on the flag of Scotland, and sent a herald to demand satisfaction. The King of England justified his conduct on the ground of Barton's being a pirate,—a charge which James could not justly deny; but he remained not the less heated and incensed against his brother-in-law. Another misfortune aggravated his resentment.

While Henry VII. was yet alive, Sir Robert Ker of Fairnyherst, chief of one branch of the clan of Ker, an officer of James's household, and a favourite of that monarch, held the office of Warden on the Middle Marches of Scotland. In exercising this office with rather unusual strictness, he had given offence to some of the more turbulent English Borderers, who resolved to assassinate him. Three of these, namely, Heron, called the Bastard, because a natural brother of Heron of Ford, with Starhed and Lilburn, surrounded the Scottish Warden, at a meeting upon a day of truce, and killed him with their lances. Henry VII., with the pacific policy which marked his proceedings towards Scotland, agreed to surrender the guilty persons. Lilburn was given up to King James, and died in captivity; Starhed escaped for a time, by flying into the interior parts of England; the Bastard Heron caused it to be rumoured that he was dead of the plague, and made him-

self be transported in a coffin, so that he passed unsuspected through the party sent to arrest him, and skulked on the Borders, waiting for a quarrel between the kingdoms. Henry VII., anxious to satisfy James, arrested his legitimate brother, and Heron of Ford was delivered up instead of the Bastard. But when Henry VIII. and James were about to disagree, both the Bastard Heron and Starhed began to show themselves more publicly. Starhed was soon disposed of, for Sir Andrew, commonly called Dand Ker, the son of the murdered Sir Robert, sent two of his dependants, called Tait, to accomplish his vengeance upon the English Borderer. They surprised and put him to death accordingly, and brought his head to their patron, who exposed it publicly at the Cross of Edinburgh, exulting in the revenge he had taken. But the Bastard Heron continued to rove about the Border, and James IV. made the public appearance of this criminal a subject of

complaint against Henry VIII., who perhaps was not justly responsible for it.

While James was thus on bad terms with his brother-in-law, France left no measures unattempted which could attach Scotland to her side. Great sums of money were sent to secure the good-will of those courtiers in whom James most confided. The Queen of France, a young and beautiful Princess, flattered James's taste for romantic gallantry, by calling herself his mistress and lady-love, and conjuring him to march three miles upon English ground for her sake. She sent him, at the same time, a ring from her own finger; and her intercession was so powerful, that James thought he could not in honour dispense with her request. This fantastical spirit of chivalry was his own ruin, and very nearly that of the kingdom also.

At length in June or July 1513, Henry VIII. sailed to France with a gallant army, where he formed the siege of Terouenne. James IV. now took a decided step. He

sent over his principal herald to the camp of King Henry before Terouenne, summoning him in haughty terms to abstain from aggressions against James's ally, the King of France, and upbraiding him, at the same time, with the death of Barton, the impunity of the Bastard Heron, and all the subjects of quarrel which had occurred since the death of Henry VII. Henry VIII. answered this letter, which he justly considered as a declaration of war, with equal bitterness, treating the King of Scots as a perjured man, because he was about to break the peace which he had solemnly sworn to observe. His summons he rejected with scorn. "The King of Scotland was not," he said, "of sufficient importance to determine the quarrel between England and France." The Scottish herald returned with this message, but not in time to find his master alive.

James had not awaited the return of his embassy to commence hostilities. Lord Home, his Lord High Chamberlain, had

made an incursion into England with an army of about three or four thousand men. They collected great booty; but marching carelessly and without order, fell into an ambush of the English Borderers, concealed among the tall broom, by which Millfield plain, near Wooler, was then covered. The Scots sustained a total defeat, and lost near a third of their numbers in slain and wounded. This was a bad commencement of the war.

Meanwhile James, contrary to the advice of his wisest counsellors, determined to invade England with a royal army. The Parliament were unwilling to go into the King's measures. The tranquillity of the country, ever since the peace with England, was recollected, and as the impolitic claim of the supremacy seemed to be abandoned, little remained to stir up the old animosity between the kingdoms. The King, however, was personally so much liked, that he obtained the consent of the Parliament to this fatal and unjust war; and orders were

given to assemble all the array of the kingdom of Scotland upon the Borough-moor of Edinburgh, a wide common, in the midst of which the royal standard was displayed from a large stone, or fragment of rock, called the Hare-stone.

Various measures were even in this extremity resorted to for preventing the war. One or two of them seem to have been founded upon a knowledge, that the King's temper was tinged with a superstitious melancholy, partly arising from constitutional habits, partly from the remorse which he always entertained for his accession to his father's death. It was to these feelings that the following scene was doubtless addressed :—

As the King was at his devotions in the church of Linlithgow, a figure, dressed in an azure-coloured robe, girt with a girdle, or sash of linen, having sandals on his feet, with long yellow hair, and a grave commanding countenance, suddenly appeared before him. He paid little or no reverence

to the royal presence, but pressing up to the desk at which the King was seated, leaned down on it with his arms, and addressed him. This singular-looking person declared, that "his Mother laid her commands on James to forbear the journey which he purposed, seeing that neither he, nor any who went with him, would thrive in the undertaking." He also cautioned the King against frequenting the society of women, and using their counsel; "if thou dost," said he, "thou shalt be confounded and brought to shame."

These words spoken, the messenger escaped from among the courtiers so suddenly, that he seemed to disappear. There seems no doubt that this person had been dressed up to represent Saint John, called in Scripture the adopted son of the Virgin Mary. The Roman Catholics believed in the possibility of the souls of departed saints and apostles appearing on earth, and many impostures are recorded in history of the same sort with that I have just told you.

Another story, not so well authenticated, says, that a proclamation was heard at the Market-cross of Edinburgh, at the dead of night, summoning the King, by his name and titles, and many of his nobles and principal leaders, to appear before the tribunal of Pluto within the space of forty days. This also has the appearance of a stratagem, invented to deter the King from his expedition.

But neither these artifices, nor the advice and entreaty of Margaret, the Queen of Scotland, could deter James from his unhappy expedition. He was so well beloved, that he soon assembled a great army, and placing himself at their head, he entered England near the castle of Twisell, on the 22d August 1513. He speedily possessed himself of the Border fortresses of Norham, Wark, Etall, Ford, and others of less note, and collected a great spoil. Instead, however, of advancing with his army upon the country of England, which lay defenceless before him, the King is said to

have trifled away his time, in an intercourse of gallantry with Lady Heron of Ford, a beautiful woman, who contrived to divert him from the prosecution of his expedition until the approach of an English army.

While James lay thus idle on the frontier, the Earl of Surrey, that same noble and gallant knight who had formerly escorted Queen Margaret to Scotland, now advanced at the head of an army of twenty-six thousand men. The Earl was joined by his son Thomas, the Lord High Admiral, with a large body of soldiers who had been disembarked at Newcastle. As the warlike inhabitants of the northern counties gathered fast to Surrey's standard, so, on the other hand, the Scots began to return home in great numbers, because, though, according to the feudal laws, each man had brought with him provisions for forty days, these being now nearly expended, a scarcity began to be felt in James's host. Others went home to place their booty in safety.

Surrey feeling himself the stronger party, became desirous to provoke the Scottish King to fight. He therefore sent James a message, defying him to battle; and the Lord Thomas Howard, at the same time, added a message, that as King James had often complained of the death of Andrew Barton, he, Lord Thomas, by whom that deed was done, was now ready to maintain it with his sword in the front of the fight. James returned for answer, that to meet the English in battle was so much his wish, that had the message of the Earl found him at Edinburgh, he would have laid aside all other business to have met him on a pitched field.

But the Scottish nobles entertained a very different opinion from the King. They held a council, at which Lord Patrick Lindsay was made president, or chancellor. This was the same person who, in the beginning of the King's reign, had pleaded so well for his brother, to whose titles and estate he afterwards succeeded. He opened the dis-

cussion, by telling the council a parable of a rich merchant, who would needs go to play at dice with a common hazarder, or sharper, and stake a rose-noble of gold against a crooked halfpenny. "You, my lords," he said, "will be as unwise as the merchant, if you risk your King, whom I compare to a precious rose-noble, against the English general, who is but an old crooked churl, lying in a chariot. Though the English lose the day, they lose nothing but this old churl and a parcel of mechanics; whereas so many of our common people have gone home, that few are left with us but the prime of our nobility." He therefore gave it as his advice, that the King should withdraw from the army, for safety of his person, and that some brave nobleman should be named by the council, to command in the action. The council agreed to recommend this plan to the King.

But James, who desired to gain fame by his own skill and prowess, suddenly broke in on the council, and told them, with much

heat, that they should not put such a disgrace upon him. "I will fight with the English," he said, "though you had all sworn the contrary. Ye may shame yourselves by flight, but you shall not shame me; and as for Lord Patrick Lindsay, who has got the first vote, I vow, that when I return to Scotland, I will cause him to be hanged over his own gate."

In this rash and precipitate resolution to fight at all risks, the King was much supported by the French ambassador, De la Motte. This was remarked by one of our old acquaintances, the Earl of Angus, called Bell-the-Cat, who, though very old, had come out to the field with his Sovereign. He charged the Frenchman with being willing to sacrifice the interests of Scotland to those of his own country, which required that the Scots and English should fight at all hazards; and Angus, like Lord Lindsay, alleged the difference between the parties, the English being many of them men but of mean rank, and the Scottish army being

the flower of their nobility and gentry. Incensed at his opposition, James said to him scornfully, "Angus, if you are afraid, you may go home." The Earl, on receiving such an insult, left the camp that night; but his two sons remained, and fell in the fatal battle, with two hundred of the name of Douglas.

While King James was in this stubborn humour, the Earl of Surrey had advanced as far as Wooler, so that only four or five miles divided the armies. The English leader inquired anxiously for some guide who was acquainted with the country, which is divided by one or two large brooks, and is, besides, in part mountainous. A person, well mounted and completely armed, rode up, and, kneeling before the Earl, offered to be his guide, if he might obtain pardon of an offence of which he had been guilty. The Earl assured him of his forgiveness, providing he had not committed treason against the King of England, or personally wronged any lady—crimes which Surrey

declared he would not pardon. "God forbid," said the cavalier, "that I should have been guilty of such shameful sin; I did but assist in killing a Scotsman, who ruled our Borders too strictly, and often did wrong to Englishmen." So saying, he raised the visor of his helmet, which hid his face, and showed the countenance of the Bastard Heron, who had been a partner in the assassination of Sir Robert Ker, as you were told before. His appearance was most welcome to the Earl of Surrey, who readily pardoned him the death of a Scotsman at that moment, and knew him to be as well acquainted with every pass and path on the eastern frontier, as a life of constant incursion and depredation could make him.

The Scottish army had fixed their camp upon a hill called Flodden, which rises to close in, as it were, the extensive flat called Millfield Plain. This eminence slopes steeply towards the plain, and there is an extended piece of level ground on the top, where the Scots might have drawn up their army,

and awaited, at great advantage, the attack of the English. Surrey liked the idea of an assault on that position so ill, that he resolved to try whether he could not prevail on the King to abandon it. He sent a herald to invite James to come down from the height, and join battle in the open plain of Millfield below—reminded him of the readiness with which he had accepted his former challenge—and hinted, that it was the opinion of the English chivalry assembled for battle, that any delay of the encounter would sound to the King's dishonour.

We have seen that James was sufficiently rash and imprudent, but his impetuosity did not reach to the pitch Surrey perhaps expected. He refused to receive the messenger into his presence, and returned for answer to the message, that it was not such as it became an Earl to send to a King.

Surrey, therefore, distressed for provisions, was obliged to resort to another mode of bringing the Scots to action. He moved northward, sweeping round the hill of

Flodden, keeping out of the reach of the Scottish artillery, until, crossing the Till near Twisell Castle, he placed himself, with his whole army, betwixt James and his own kingdom. The King suffered him to make this flank movement without interruption, though it must have afforded repeated and advantageous opportunities for attack. But when he saw the English army interposed betwixt him and his dominions, he became alarmed lest he should be cut off from Scotland. In this apprehension he was confirmed by one Giles Musgrave, an Englishman, whose counsel he used upon the occasion, and who assured him, that if he did not descend and fight with the English army, the Earl of Surrey would enter Scotland, and lay waste the whole country. Stimulated by this apprehension, the King resolved to give signal for the fatal battle.

With this view the Scots set fire to their huts, and the other refuse and litter of their camp. The smoke spread along the side of the hill, and under its cover the army of

King James descended the eminence, which is much less steep on the northern than the southern side, while the English advanced to meet them, both concealed from each other by the clouds of smoke.

The Scots descended in four strong columns, all marching parallel to each other, having a reserve of the Lothian men commanded by Earl Bothwell. The English were also divided into four bodies, with a reserve of cavalry led by Dacre.

The first which encountered was the left wing of the Scots, commanded by the Earl of Huntly and Lord Home, which overpowered and threw into disorder the right wing of the English, under Sir Edmund Howard. Sir Edmund was beaten down, his standard taken, and he himself in danger of instant death, when he was relieved by the Bastard Heron, who came up at the head of a band of determined outlaws like himself, and extricated Howard. It is objected to the Lord Home by many Scottish writers, that he ought to have improved

his advantage, by hastening to the support of the next division of the Scottish army. It is even pretended, that he replied to those who urged him to go to the assistance of the King, that "the man did well that day who stood and saved himself." But this seems an invention to criminate Home, and to account for the loss of the battle in some other way than by the superiority of the English. In reality, the English cavalry, under Dacre, which acted as a reserve, appear to have kept the victors in check, while Thomas Howard, the Lord High Admiral, who commanded the second division of the English, bore down, and routed the Scottish division commanded by Crawford and Montrose, who were both slain. Thus matters went on the Scottish left.

Upon the extreme right of James's army, a division of Highlanders, consisting of the clans of Mackenzie, Maclean, and others, commanded by the Earl of Lennox and Argyle, were so insufferably annoyed by the volleys of the English arrows, that they broke their ranks, and, in despite of the

cries, entreaties, and signals of De la Motte, the French ambassador, who endeavoured to stop them, rushed tumultuously down hill, and being attacked at once in flank and rear by Sir Edward Stanley, with the men of Cheshire and Lancashire, were routed with great slaughter.

The only Scots division which remains to be mentioned, was commanded by James in person, and consisted of the choicest of his nobles and gentry, whose armour was so good, that the arrows made but slight impression upon them. They were all on foot —the King himself had parted with his horse. They engaged the Earl of Surrey, who opposed to them the division which he personally commanded. The Scots attacked with the greatest fury, and, for a time, had the better. Surrey's squadrons were disordered, his standard in great danger, Bothwell and the Scots reserve were coming up, and the English seemed in some risk of losing the battle. But Stanley, who had defeated the Highlanders, came up on one flank of the King's division; the Admiral, who had con-

quered Crawford and Montrose, assailed them on the other. The Scots showed the most undaunted courage. Uniting themselves with the reserve under Bothwell, they formed themselves into a circle, with their spears extended on every side, and fought obstinately. Bows being now useless, the English advanced on all sides with their bills, a huge weapon which made ghastly wounds. But they could not force the Scots either to break or retire, although the carnage among them was dreadful. James himself died amid his warlike peers and loyal gentry. He was twice wounded with arrows, and, at length, dispatched with a bill. Night fell without the battle being absolutely decided, for the Scottish centre kept their ground, and Home and Dacre held each other at bay. But during the night, the remainder of the Scottish army drew off in silent despair from the bloody field, on which they left their King, and their choicest nobles and gentlemen.

This great and decisive victory was gained by the Earl of Surrey on 9th September

1513. The victors lost about five thousand men—the Scots twice that number at least. But the loss lay not so much in the *number of the slain*, as in their rank and quality. The English lost very few men of distinction. The Scots left on the field the King, two Bishops, two mitred Abbots, twelve Earls, thirteen Lords, and five eldest sons of Peers. The number of gentlemen slain was beyond calculation;—there is scarcely a family of name in Scottish history who did not lose a relation there.

The Scots were much disposed to dispute the fact, that James IV. had fallen on Flodden Field. Some said he had retired from the kingdom, and made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Others pretended, that in the twilight, when the fight was nigh ended, four tall horsemen came into the field, having each a bunch of straw on the point of their spears, as a token for them to know each other by. They said these men mounted the King on a dun hackney, and that he was seen to cross the Tweed with them at night-fall. Nobody pretended to say what

they did with him, but it was believed he was murdered in Home Castle; and I recollect, about forty years since, that there was a report, that in cleaning the draw-well of that ruinous fortress, the workmen found a skeleton wrapt in a bull's hide, and having a belt of iron round the waist. There was, however, no truth in this rumour. It was this belt of iron, which the Scots founded upon to prove, that the body of James could not have fallen into the hands of the English, since they either had not that token to show, or did not produce it. They contended, therefore, that the body over which the enemy triumphed, was not that of James himself, but of one of his attendants, several of whom, they said, were dressed in his armour.

But all these are idle fables, invented and believed because the vulgar love what is mysterious, and readily gave credit to what tended to deprive their enemies of so signal a trophy of victory. The reports are contrary to common sense. Lord Home was

the Chamberlain of James IV., and high in his confidence. He had nothing whatever to gain by the King's death, and therefore we must acquit him of a great crime, for which there could be no adequate motive. The consequence of James's death proved, in fact, to be the Earl's ruin, as we shall see presently.

It seems true, that the King usually wore the chain of iron in token of his repentance for his father's death, and the share he had in it. But it is not unlikely that he would lay aside such a cumbrous article of dress in a day of battle; or the English may have found it, and thrown it aside as of no value. The body which the English affirm to have been that of James, was found on the field by Lord Dacre, and carried by him to Berwick, and presented to Surrey. Both of these Lords knew James's person too well to be mistaken. The body was also acknowledged by his two favourite attendants, Sir William Scott, and Sir John Forman, who wept at beholding it.

The fate of these relics was singular and

degrading. They were not committed to the tomb, for the Pope, being at the time in an alliance with England against France, had laid James under a sentence of excommunication, so that no priest dared pronounce the funeral service over them. The royal corpse was therefore embalmed, and sent to the monastery of Sheen in Surrey. It lay there till the Reformation, when the monastery was given to the Duke of Suffolk; and after that period, the body, which was lapped up in a sheet of lead, was suffered to toss about the house like a piece of useless lumber. Stowe, the historian, saw it flung into a waste room among old pieces of wood, lead, and other rubbish. Some idle workmen, "for their foolish pleasure," says the same writer, hewed off the head; and one Lancelot Young, master-glazier to Queen Elizabeth, finding a sweet smell come from thence, owing, doubtless, to the spices used for embalming the body, carried the head home, and kept it for some time; but in the end, caused the sexton of

Saint Michael's, Wood Street, to bury it in the charnel-house.

Such was the end of that King once so proud and powerful. The fatal battle of Flodden, in which he was slain, and his army destroyed, is justly considered as one of the most calamitous events in Scottish history.

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